MONTANA PARTNERSHIP FOR EARLY LITERACY

Evaluation Report of Implementation from September 2012 – May 2013

August 2013



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CREATING STRONG SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES

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Angela Roccograndi

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About Education Northwest

Education Northwest was founded more than 40 years ago as a nonprofit corporation. The organization's mission is to improve learning by building capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development. We draw on many years of experience designing and conducting educational and social research, as well as providing consultation for a broad array of research and development efforts.

This external evaluation of Montana Partnership for Early Literacy was conducted at the request of the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The author has extensive experience evaluating education programs, including other initiatives for early childhood and elementary literacy.

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Executive Summary

Overview

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* added a new reading initiative to the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*—the Early Reading First program. It addressed the concern that many children enter kindergarten without the necessary literacy foundation to enable them to succeed in school. In fall 2009, the United States Department of Education awarded an Early Reading First grant to the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to implement the *Montana Partnership for Early Literacy* (MTPEL). OPI implemented MTPEL from January 2010 through May 2013. MTPEL had four goals:

1. All participating children will graduate with high achievement levels in language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, and classroom skills necessary to participate effectively in elementary school and to become proficient at reading.
2. All classrooms will contain the materials (instructional, play) and spatial arrangements (e.g., centers) that will support the development of children's language and early literacy skills.
3. All teachers will achieve high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices through timely, targeted, sustained, and intensive professional development on children's acquisition and use of language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, and print awareness. Teachers' instructional proficiencies are applied both to (1) children making satisfactory progress, and (2) children for whom progress monitoring identifies the need for intervention in a Response to Intervention (RTI) process.
4. All children and families will transition successfully into K-3 programs aligned with scientifically based reading research (SBRR).

To attain these goals, MTPEL combined two SBRR programs—*Opening the World of Learning* (OWL) and *Language for Learning* (LFL). These two curriculums formed the core reading program (Tier 1) in which all children participated. Based on a RTI model, children not performing at anticipated levels received additional supports in Tier 2 or Tier 3.

Data from a variety of screening, progress-monitoring, and outcome assessments supported the RTI model. These included the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test 4* (PPVT), *Test of Preschool Early Language* (TOPEL), *Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening* (PALS), and *Get it, Got it, Go!* MTPEL used the *Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation* (ELLCO) and the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (CLASS) to collect additional data on the classroom environment and instruction.

In conjunction with a comprehensive educational program in the classroom, additional programming was available to increase MTPEL children's preparedness for reading and kindergarten. Family members could participate in parent literacy events aimed to improve parents' ability to communicate with their children, build language, and support their children at home. In addition, MTPEL worked through the preschool centers to strengthen activities around the transition of children to kindergarten, and with the local education agencies to ensure alignment existed between preschool and kindergarten curriculums.

MTPEL also focused attention on improving the English language acquisition of English language learners (ELLs). MTPEL's ELLs were primarily members of American Indian tribes who attended school in an area on or near an American Indian reservation. A second population targeted in the grant was special needs children.

MTPEL provided an array of professional development opportunities—including summer and winter institutes, site-based training, coaching, professional learning communities, undergraduate/graduate coursework, and portfolio development—to MTPEL teachers, coaches, center directors, teacher assistants (TAs), and parents.

In fall 2012, OPI contracted with Education Northwest to evaluate the fourth, and final, continuation year of MTPEL. The evaluation, smaller in scope, addressed the extent to which implementation of its Early Reading First grant enabled the program to meet its goals. The evaluation relied on a mix of methodologies and included the analysis of child assessment data, the administration of surveys to center staff members, the administration of interviews to OPI staff members, and the review of project documentation.

2012–2013 Participation

From fall 2012 continuing through May 2013, approximately 40 teachers, TAs, coaches, and center directors participated in MTPEL, across four sites and 17 classrooms. These center staff members interacted with almost 300 children enrolled in MTPEL classrooms. The majority of these children were age-eligible to kindergarten in fall 2013 (62%). About three-quarters of the children (n=222) were identified as participating for the whole preschool year.

To What Extent Did MTPEL Accomplish Its Goals?

The Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL) was largely successful in attaining its goals.

1. **All participating children will graduate with high achievement levels in language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, and classroom skills necessary to participate effectively in elementary school and to become proficient at reading.**

While all participating children did not graduate with high achievement levels n important early reading skills, by spring 2013, almost four-fifths of MTPEL students did. The majority of children were at benchmark in the areas of knowledge of letter sounds (93%), name-writing ability (92%), expressive language (89%), upper-case letter recognition (88%), receptive language (85%), print knowledge (82%), and phonological awareness (79%).

2. **All classrooms will contain the materials (instructional, play) and spatial arrangements (e.g., centers) that will support the development of children's language and early literacy skills and all teachers will achieve high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices.**

The evaluation measured classroom implementation and teacher proficiency in several ways, and the different measures produced different findings. According to teacher self-reports and child assessment data, teachers achieved high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices to create and maintain an environment conducive to children acquiring early literacy skills. Although classroom materials and arrangements were not formally evaluated in Year 4, evaluators asked teachers to rate their ability to prepare their classroom environment to engage children and language and literacy activities. Teachers self-reported growth in this area— using a five-point scale of "1" meaning low ability to "5" meaning high ability—of 0.7 (from 3.8 to 4.5). Similarly they self-reported growth, using the same scale, of 0.5 (from 4.0 to 4.5) in their ability to instruct children to best prepare them for kindergarten. Finally, teachers rated their ability to use data to prepare, differentiate, and modify instruction; teachers self-reported growth of 0.1 (from 4.2 to 4.3) on the same 5-point scale. In all cases, teachers self-reported their ability in spring 2013 in the high range.

According to child assessment scores, teachers also achieved high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices. Children's receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, and name writing skills and their knowledge of letters, letter sounds, and concepts of print improved significantly from fall 2012 to spring 2013. In addition, according to teacher reports, over three-quarters (83%) of the children were performing at or above where the average child performs in listening comprehension. Furthermore, on all but one assessment, a significantly larger proportion of children were at benchmark in spring 2013 then in spring 2010. Finally, findings also indicate that teachers' instructional skills in these areas improved over time; almost every spring, a higher proportion of children attained benchmark than was achieved the previous spring, on every assessment.

However, evaluators found no growth on Part One of the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*. In fall 2012 and spring 2013, teachers answered just over two-thirds (69%) of the items correctly. While teachers' knowledge increased over the year in the areas of phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics, incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms, working with ELLs, and print awareness, it decreased in the areas of letter knowledge, differentiating instruction, and math.

3. **Teachers' instructional proficiencies are applied both to (1) children making satisfactory progress, and (2) children for whom progress monitoring identifies the need for intervention in a Response to Intervention (RTI) process.**

The vast majority of children making satisfactory progress in fall 2012 continued to make satisfactory progress in spring 2013 (89% to100% at benchmark). Children not making satisfactory progress in fall 2012, and thus eligible for intervention in a RTI process, had more variable progress by spring (56% to 88% at benchmark).

Table ES-1
Percentage of Children at Benchmark in Spring 2013, by Assessment

	Percentage	
Assessment	Children Making Satisfactory Progress (Fall 2012)	Children Eligible for RTI (Fall 2012)
PPVT	96% (131)	56% (32)
TOPEL Definitional Vocabulary	96% (133)	67% (35)
TOPEL Phonological Awareness	89% (104)	60% (44)
TOPEL Print Knowledge	92% (88)	73% (69)
PALS Upper Case Alphabet Recognition	100% (33)	85% (93)
PALS Name Writing	98% (52)	88% (79)
PALS Letter Sounds	100% (56)	86% (77)

4. **All children and families will transition successfully into K-3 programs aligned with scientifically based reading research (SBRR).**

MTPEL implemented family literacy and kindergarten transition programs that would help children and families transition successfully into K-3 programs. Research shows successful transitions occur under several conditions, which MTPEL demonstrated (Pianta, Rimm-Kauffman, & Cox, 1999):

- The vast majority of parents indicated that their child enjoyed school (96%).
- Assessment results indicate that most children showed steady growth in academic skills.
- The majority of parents participated in classroom activities, field trips and family literacy events, and parents of kindergarten-bound children took advantage, or were planning to take advantage of, kindergarten transition activities.
- Some preschoolers, parents, and kindergarten teachers had the opportunity to develop relationships prior to the start of school.
- "Road Maps" and other kindergarten transitions activities established collaborative efforts between schools, parents, community groups, and social service organizations.

Finally, kindergarten teachers of a cohort of spring 2011 MTPEL graduates used a variety of SBRR curriculums and assessments to assess and monitor early literacy skills. MTPEL graduates from spring 2013 will be attending the same schools.

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Acknowledgements

The entire MTPEL team—from the Program Director to the teacher assistants in the classrooms—has been a valuable resource in compiling this report. Debbie Hunsaker, Rhonda Siemens, Tara Ferriter-Smith, and Terri Barclay generously shared their time and knowledge about the implementation of the grant. Coaches, teachers, teacher assistants, and center directors completed surveys; teachers collected PALS data; and the MTPEL assessment team collected PPVT and TOPEL data. These were all shared with the evaluation team for analysis.

I also extend thanks to Margaret Gunn at Education Northwest. She posted surveys, entered data into spreadsheets and tables, made figures, proofread, and formatted the report.

Without the assistance of all of the above individuals, this report would not have been possible.

Thank you,
Angela Roccograndi

Chapter One: Introduction

Early Reading First

The *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* (NCLB) added a new reading initiative to the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*—the Early Reading First program. Early Reading First addressed the concern that many children enter kindergarten without the necessary literacy foundation to enable them to succeed in school. It is an initiative to create early childhood centers of excellence that prepare young children from low-income families to be successful in their future learning and to prevent reading difficulties. As cited in NCLB, the mission of Early Reading First is "to ensure that all children enter kindergarten with the necessary language, cognitive, and early reading skills for continued success in school."

Montana Partnership for Early Literacy

In fall 2009, the United States Department of Education awarded 28 Early Reading First grants. The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) received one of those grants to implement the *Montana Partnership for Early Literacy* (MTPEL). MTPEL had four goals:

1. All participating children will graduate with high achievement levels in language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, and classroom skills necessary to participate effectively in elementary school and to become proficient at reading.
2. All classrooms will contain the materials (instructional, play) and spatial arrangements (e.g., centers) that will support the development of children's language and early literacy skills.
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To attain these goals, MTPEL combined two SBRR programs—*Opening the World of Learning* (OWL) and *Language for Learning* (LFL). These two curriculums formed the core reading program (Tier 1) in which all children participated. Based on a RTI model, children not performing at anticipated levels received additional supports in Tier 2. A third tier of

instruction was also available to children who continued to struggle. Children who participated in Tier 3 instruction received additional services from specialists and teachers in the classroom.

Data from a variety of screening, progress-monitoring, and outcome assessments supported the RTI model. These included the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test 4* (PPVT), *Test of Preschool Early Language* (TOPEL), *Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening* (PALS), and *Get it, Got it, Go!* MTPEL used the *Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation* (ELLCO) and the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System* (CLASS) to collect additional data on the classroom environment and instruction.

In conjunction with a comprehensive educational program in the classroom, additional programming was available to increase MTPEL children's preparedness for reading and kindergarten. Family members participated in parent literacy events aimed to improve parents' ability to communicate with their children, build language, and support their children at home. In addition, MTPEL worked through the preschool centers to strengthen activities around the transition of children to kindergarten, and with the local education agencies to ensure alignment existed between the preschool and kindergarten curriculums.

Evaluation and Methods

In December 2009, OPI contracted with Education Northwest, in Portland, Oregon, to provide a comprehensive evaluation of MTPEL. OPI renewed this contract in fall 2012 to evaluate the fourth, and final, year of grant implementation (September 2012–May 2013).

The evaluation relies on a combination of methodologies—using existing measures (some for which validity and reliability are well-established) and creating additional instruments—to answer the evaluation questions. The following describes each data collection method, the extent to which data were collected for the evaluation, and notes on analyses.

Document Review

MTPEL shared agendas with Education Northwest to document the content of professional development/training activities provided to MTPEL center staff members.

Analysis of Child-Assessment Data

Evaluators measured the development of early reading skills in the MTPEL classrooms by administering the PPVT (receptive vocabulary), TOPEL (expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, and print knowledge) and the PALS (alphabet knowledge, letter sounds, and name writing) assessments. Teachers administered the Picture Naming task from *Get it, Got it, Go!* as a progress-monitoring tool for expressive language. Data from this assessment are not included in this report. In September 2012 and January and May 2013, the MTPEL assessment team administered the PPVT and TOPEL; teachers administered the PALS and *Get it, Got it, Go!*

Education Northwest developed an Excel spreadsheet that automatically calculated standard scores from the PPVT and TOPEL raw data. The spreadsheet also automatically calculated the percentages of children scoring in three ranges—below average, average, and above average—on the PPVT, TOPEL and PALS, and provided a summary of project results and classroom-level reports. This worksheet provided the project with a fall data summary. Education Northwest received a file of student assessment data (fall 2012 and spring 2013) in July 2013 for analysis.

PPVT. The PPVT produces a raw score which is converted into a standard score. An average standard score on the PPVT is 100. Children receiving a score between 85 and 115 are considered "Average," with those scoring between 85 and 99 "Low Average," and those scoring between 101 and 115 "High Average." Children scoring between 84 and 70, and below 70, are considered "Moderately Low" and "Extremely Low," respectively; children scoring between 116 and 130, and above 130, are considered "Moderately High" and "Extremely High," respectively. Evaluators included children tested in fall 2012 and spring 2013 (i.e., children who participated from September through May) in PPVT analyses; a total of 194 of the 268 MTPEL participants (72%) qualified for inclusion. Analyses relied on McNemar's chi-square to determine differences in the distributions of children in two categories of the PPVT—the percentage of children "below" and "at or above" a standard score of 90.

TOPEL. The TOPEL has three subtests—Definitional Vocabulary, Print Knowledge, and Phonological Awareness. Like the PPVT, the TOPEL subtests provide raw scores that are converted into standard scores, with an average of 100. The TOPEL standard scores place a child in one of three categories; a score above 110 is considered "Above Average," a score from 90 to 110 is considered "Average," and a score less than 90 is considered "Below Average." The TOPEL also computes an Early Literacy Index (ELI), which is the sum of the three standard scores that is then standardized. The ELI has seven categories—three below "Average," "Average," and three above "Average." Evaluators included children tested on each of the three subtests in fall 2012 and spring 2013 in analyses; a total of 191 of the 268 MTPEL participants (71%) qualified for inclusion. Similar to the PPVT, evaluators calculated the percentage of children" below" and" at or above" a standard score of 90. Analyses relied on McNemar's chi-square to determine if there were differences in the distributions of children in the two categories.

PALS. The PALS contains eight tasks, three of which are administered in MTPEL classrooms—Name Writing, Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition, and Letter Sounds. The PALS provides a "Spring Development Range" (SDR) for four-year-old children who are preparing to start kindergarten. Children of this age are expected to score at least a "5" on the name writing rubric, to correctly identify at least 12 upper-case alphabet letters, and to correctly generate at least four letter sounds.

Evaluators included children tested in fall 2012 and spring 2013 on each of the three PALS tasks in analyses, and separately analyzed children age-eligible to attend kindergarten in fall 2013 and 2014, respectively. A total of 143 children, age-eligible to attend kindergarten in fall 2013,

took the three PALS tasks (Name Writing, Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition, and Letter Sounds) in the fall and spring (81%). In the fall and spring, a total of 59 children, age-eligible to attend kindergarten in *fall 2014*, took the three tasks (64%). McNemar's chi-square determined differences in the distributions of children in two categories of the PALS—the percentage of children below and within/above the SDR on each task.

Achievement Gap Analyses. Evaluators did not conduct achievement gap analyses in Year 4. Demographic data were not included in the student assessment file received by Education Northwest.

Surveys

Teachers, TAs, center directors, and parents were administered a variety of surveys.

- In winter 2013, evaluators revised the spring 2012 Staff Satisfaction Survey. As in previous years, it addressed the quality and sufficiency of communications with MTPEL staff members; participation and usefulness of professional development; teachers' perceptions of children's oral listening comprehension; and teachers' perceptions of the impact of participating in MTPEL on their ability to instruct preschool children. Center staff members completed the Staff Satisfaction Survey in spring 2013. A total of 27 staff members completed the survey: teachers represented 22 percent of respondents (35% response rate), teacher assistants represented 63 percent of respondents (100% response rate), coaches represented 4 percent of respondents (50% response rate), and center directors represented 11 percent of respondents (75% response rate). A copy of the survey is in Appendix A.
- The *Teacher Knowledge Survey* (Neuman & Cunningham, 2009) assessed teachers' level of knowledge in a variety of areas related to language and literacy in an early childhood educational environment. Teachers completed the *Teacher Knowledge Survey* in fall 2012 and spring 2013. A total of 10 teachers completed the survey both times (59% response rate) and were included in analyses. A copy of the survey is in Appendix B.
- Evaluators used a sample of items from the *Parent Reading Belief Inventory* (DeBaryshe & Binder, 1990) to assess parents' attitudes towards reading and parent involvement in the early education of their child. A total of 202 parents completed the short survey in fall 2012 (about a 72% response rate). Parents from preschool children at Great Falls Head Start were most likely to complete the survey (55%), followed by those from Great Falls Public (20%), Hardin (15%), and Evergreen (10%).
- Evaluators also developed a Parent Survey that assessed parents' overall participation in several aspects of the grant and the extent to which they found the activities helpful. The Parent Survey also included the items from the *Parent Reading Belief Inventory* administered in fall 2012. A total of 161 parents completed the spring survey (about a 57% response rate). Parents from preschool children at Great Falls Head Start were most likely to complete the survey (51%), followed by those from Hardin (21%), Evergreen (15%), and Great Falls Public (14%). A copy of the instrument is in Appendix D.

MTPEL Staff Member Telephone Interviews

Evaluators revised the 2012 telephone interview protocol for MTPEL staff members in spring 2013. Interview questions addressed areas of importance to each role with some overlap across content and roles. Topics included roles and responsibilities; professional development;, assessments/progress monitoring, data use, and RTI; curriculum and intervention materials; family literacy; and kindergarten transition. Four OPI staff members (Program Director, Early Reading First Specialists and Assessment/Kindergarten Transition/Family Literacy Coordinators) participated in interviews in summer 2013. A copy of the interview protocol is in Appendix E.

Participation

MTPEL participants included center staff members and the sites they work at, and preschool children and the classrooms they learned in. Evaluators used the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*, Staff Satisfaction Survey, and Excel spreadsheet with child assessment data to collected demographic data on participants. The following analyses exclude center staff member demographics because of their limited response rates to the *Teacher Knowledge Survey* and Staff Satisfaction Survey.

Sites and Classrooms

In the final year of MTPEL, 17 classrooms participated. This represents a decrease from both the beginning of the project and the last full year of funding. The primary reason for the decrease was because participation included only centers that had continuation funds to operate a fourth year of MTPEL. Fort Belknap did not participate during the 2012–2013 preschool year. From January 2010 through spring 2011, the number of classrooms participating in the project increased (Table 1-1). In January 2010, 21 classrooms participated across five sites. In spring 2010, the project opened an additional classroom in Great Falls Public; this occurred again in fall 2010. By spring 2011, Fort Belknap closed one classroom due to limited enrollment, but Hardin opened two additional classrooms. In the third year of the project, Great Fall Public opened an additional classroom, but Hardin eliminated one. In the final year of the project, the project dropped one site (Fort Belknap) and Great Falls Head Start dropped one classroom. This brought the total number of classrooms in the project down from 21 at the start of the project to 17 at the end.

Table 1-1
MTPEL Sites and Classrooms

Site	January 2010	Spring 2010	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2011/ Spring 2012	Fall 2012/ Spring 2013
Evergreen	2	2	2	2	2	2
Fort Belknap	7	7	7	6	6	0
Great Falls Head Start	8	8	8	8	8	7
Great Falls Public	2	3	4	4	5	5
Hardin	2	2	2	4	3	3
Total	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**	**24**	**17**

Preschool Children

Table 1-2 shows that 282 preschool children received some instruction in a MTPEL classroom from fall 2012 to spring 2013. The Great Falls Head Start site enrolled the most children (50%). The Great Falls Public site enrolled 25 percent of MTPEL's child participants, Hardin enrolled 15 percent, and Evergreen enrolled 10 percent. The majority of MTPEL children (62%) would have turned five by September 11, 2013 and would have been age-eligible to attend kindergarten; the remaining children would be age-eligible to return to their MTPEL classroom for the 2013–2014 preschool year. While 282 children participated in a MTPEL classroom at one time or another during the 2012–2013 preschool year, fewer children participated for the whole preschool year (as evidenced by having both fall and spring assessment scores). Almost four-fifths of the MTPEL children (79%) continuously participated in MTPEL instruction from September 2012 to May 2013.

Table 1-2
Participation of MTPEL Children, by Site and in Assessments

	Percent (n)		
	All Children	**Children Age-Eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall 2013**	**Children Age-Eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall 2014**
	100% (282)	62% (176)	33% (92)
Site			
Evergreen	10% (29)	9% (16)	13% (12)
Great Falls Head Start	50% (141)	43% 75)	67% (62)
Great Falls Public	25% (69)	34% (59)	1% (1)
Hardin	15% (43)	15% (26)	19% (17)
Participated in Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 Assessment			
PALS	75% (268)	81% (143)	64% (59)
PPVT	70% (188)	81% (143)	49% (45)
TOPEL	69% (185)	79% (176)	50% (46)

Chapter Two: Staffing and Communication

The Early Reading First grant funding the Montana Partnership for Early Learning (MTPEL) supports four staff positions in the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI). These staff members managed the grant and provided much of the professional development and technical assistance to center directors, coaches, teachers, and teacher assistants (TAs). In addition to funding OPI staff members, Early Reading First funds hired consultants who also provided professional development and support to coaches, teachers, and TAs at their sites. Together, the staff members from OPI and the consultants formed the state team. This year, continuation funds only supported coaches at two of the four MTPEL sites. This chapter uses data collected from the Staff Satisfaction Survey and interviews, and addresses staff roles and responsibilities and center staff member satisfaction with their interactions with the state team.

Roles and Responsibilities

MTPEL staffing included four OPI staff members who filled the roles of Project Director, Data Coordinator, Family Literacy Coordinator, Kindergarten Transition Coordinator, and Early Reading First (ERF) Specialist (some individuals played more than one role). Staff members also included three consultants who worked with the center directors, coaches, teachers, and TAs at the four MTPEL sites.

OPI Staff Members

Project Director. The MTPEL Project Director, Ms. Hunsaker, oversaw all aspects of the grant. She executed contracts, managed the budget, and was available to respond to inquiries from the sites regarding budget and grant requirements and team members. Overall, the majority of surveyed center staff directors and coaches indicated that the amount of communication with Ms. Hunsaker was "just right" (100%), that her tone was positive (100%), and that she was "very" or "extremely" helpful (75%).

ERF Specialists. In the role of ERF Specialists, Ms. Siemens and Ms. Ferriter-Smith helped center staff members to implement sustainability plans, and coordinated and provided professional development and technical assistance to them. Ms. Siemens worked with center staff members in Evergreen and Ms. Ferriter-Smith focused her attention on Great Falls and Hardin. The ERF Specialists also coordinated with hired consultants assigned to specific sites.

During site visits, ERF Specialists worked with both center leadership (directors and coaches) and instructional staff (teachers and TAs) by supporting the development of skills introduced in off-site professional development venues. In their work with center leadership, they engaged in leadership development by participating in meetings, analyzing data, and assisting leaders in identifying and monitoring goals and plans for sustainability. They assisted center staff members in building progress-monitoring and interventions systems. ERF Specialists facilitated

instilling the foundational concepts of early childhood literacy in new teachers and TAs hired at the sites, and assisted in integrating the *Creative Curriculum* (a curriculum adopted at one site) into the classroom centers. They also observed teachers in their classrooms and modeled as necessary. At any time, they were available to brainstorm, answer questions, provide feedback, and offer support.

Data and Kindergarten Transition Coordinators. Ms. Barclay assumed the roles of both Data and Kindergarten Transition coordinator. As Data Coordinator, she oversaw the administration of the child assessments and classroom observation protocols. This included coordinating the assessment team and collecting, cleaning, analyzing, and reporting data to other project staff members and the external evaluator. As Kindergarten Transition Coordinator, Ms. Barclay worked with center staff members to help support and enhance their efforts to prepare children for the transition to kindergarten. OPI staff members worked with center staff members on their kindergarten transition plans. They also encouraged their continued collaboration with kindergarten teachers by working backward from the Common Core expectations for kindergarteners to the Montana Early Learning Guidelines to identify overlaps and gaps and work to strengthen connections between the two. Another major focus this year was integrating technology into the preschools (including SMART Boards and iPads).

Family Literacy Coordinator. Ms. Siemens was the project's Family Literacy Coordinator. She worked with consultants to align the project's vast array of family literacy resources to the Montana Early Learning Guidelines and Common Core and posted them for distribution on the Internet.

Staff members were positive about the communication they had with their ERF Specialists and Data, Kindergarten Transition, and Family Literacy coordinators. Overall, the majority of survey respondents indicated that the quantity of communication was "just right" (71%); an equal percentage of respondents (14%) indicated it was "too little" or "too much." Many respondents found their tone was positive (60%). Two-fifths of center staff members (42%) found their communications of average helpfulness; 17 percent thought they were very helpful and 8 percent found them extremely helpful.

Consultants

Consultants also provided professional development to coaches, teachers, and TAs. The consultants work in coordination with the ERF Specialists. On-site, much of the work they did mirrored that of the Early Reading First Specialists. However, as was reported, they spent more time with the teachers and TAs and their use of the curriculum, and generally visited the sites more frequently. They observed, modeled for teachers, supported implementation of Tier 1 instructions and interventions, developed positive behavior and social emotional supports, and modeled how to use data and differentiate instruction.

Staff members viewed their communications positively. Overall, the vast majority of survey respondents indicated that the quantity of communication was "just right" (71%); about one quarter of center staff members indicated they had "too little" time with consultants this year. Center staff members reported that the consultants' tone was positive (93%) and that communications were "very" or "extremely" helpful (82%).

Center Coaches

Center coaches worked with teachers and TAs in their classrooms. Although in previous years all sites had coaches, only two sites funded coaches this year. Teachers and TAs found the communications they had with center coaches to be positive. Overall, the majority of survey respondents (90%) indicated that the quantity of communication was "just right." All teachers and TAs reported that their coaches' tone was positive. Finally, most staff members (80%) reported coaches' communications as "very" or "extremely" helpful.

Summary

A total of four OPI staff members and three consultants collaborated to implement the program components associated with the MTPEL grant. These staff members provided the majority of professional development and technical assistance to center directors, coaches, teachers, and TAs who were implementing the program in the 17 preschool classrooms. They also coordinated the project's Family Literacy and Kindergarten Transition plans and oversaw the administration of child assessments and classroom observations by the state's assessment team. In addition to the seven state-team members, two coaches provided technical and logistical support to preschool teachers and TAs on site.

Overall, center staff members viewed communication with the state team and their coach positively. The majority of survey respondents indicated that the quantity of communication was "just right," that their tone was positive, and their communications were "very" or "extremely" helpful. Center staff members were most positive about the communication they had with their consultants.

Chapter Three: Professional Development and Family Involvement

From fall 2012 through spring 2013, the Montana Partnership for Early Learning (MTPEL) implemented its professional development program. Center directors, coaches, teachers, and teacher assistants (TAs) participated in professional development in off- and on-site venues. Off-site professional development opportunities provided staff members across centers time to come together as a group. This year, MTPEL center staff members participated in professional development offered to the preschool sites that received Montana Striving Readers Project (MSRP) funding. On-site professional development opportunities and technical assistance allowed center staff members to receive individualized attention in their work setting. Parents participated in educational opportunities on site.

This chapter describes the variety of professional development formats offered, participation in, content presented, and the degree to which participants found the professional development format and content helpful. The chapter ends with a look at the educational opportunities available to parents of MTPEL's child participants via on-site family literacy events. It uses data collected from a variety of sources, including project documentation such as training agendas, the Staff Satisfaction Survey, interviews with Office of Public Instruction (OPI) staff members, and the Parent Survey.

Professional Development Formats and Perceptions

MTPEL's professional development program made use of a variety of formats including meetings in Helena and coaching from Early Reading First (ERF) Specialists, consultants, and site coaches. A description of each format and the extent of its perceived usefulness by participants follow.

Meetings

Twice a year, in fall and winter, center staff members participated in MSRP meetings in Helena. These meetings were required for center leadership. The meetings were two days in length and included OPI staff members and contracted consultants as trainers. OPI offered an optional meeting in December 2012 as well. Content included the main components of early literacy (alphabet knowledge, oral language/vocabulary, print concepts, and phonemic awareness) and the *CORE Sourcebook*; integrating technology into the preschool classroom; *Dialogic Reading*; the Montana Literacy Plan, Early Learning Guidelines, and Common Core; the MSRP Continuous Improvement Cycle; collecting and using student- and teacher-level data; and kindergarten transition and family literacy activities.

About one-quarter of MTPEL center staff members completing the Staff Satisfaction Survey reported attending the October meeting; 16 percent attended the February meeting. About half

of the participants found the meetings to be of average helpfulness and half found them very helpful. Eight percent of respondents attended the December meeting and all found it to be very helpful.

Coaching from ERF Specialists and Consultants

In addition to off-site professional development at meetings, each site received visits from their ERF Specialist and consultant. About one-quarter of staff members reported working with their ERF Specialist and found it to be of average helpfulness (67%) or very helpful (33%). More staff members—54 percent—reported receiving on-site support from their consultant. The majority found it very (54%) or extremely helpful (23%).

Coaching from Site Coaches

Center coaches worked with teachers and TAs in their classroom. Two MTPEL centers did not have continuation funds to support coaches this year. At centers with coaches, and of teachers completing the survey, 66 percent indicating working with their site coach in their classroom. They tended to find it of average helpfulness (50%) or very helpful (50%). One-half of TAs completing the survey indicating working with their site coach. Those who did, found it of average helpfulness (33%) or very helpful (67%). Over three-quarters of teachers (80%) indicated participating in pre/post conference coaching with their site coach. They tended to find it of average helpfulness (75%) or very helpful (25%). Finally, over three-fourths of teachers (80%) indicated they had participated in video reflection/portfolio development. They tended to find it of average helpfulness (100%).

Center Director Walk-throughs

Teachers and TAs also received support from their center director. As an instructional leader, the center director goes beyond the role of an administrator and becomes a leader in instructional issues as well. In the case of MTPEL, that would, at the least, entail understanding the curriculums, assessments, and the Response to Intervention (RTI) process and being able to recognize when essential components of those are, or are not, being implemented in the classrooms. To do this effectively, center directors conduct walk-throughs of the classrooms in order to gather data to provide meaningful support and feedback to teachers and coaches. Three-fifths of teachers reported receiving feedback following a walk-through by their center director and reported it as of average helpfulness (100%).

Professional Development Content

Across the varied professional development formats, MTPEL provided content in numerous areas. The Staff Satisfaction Survey provided a list of professional development content and asked survey respondents to indicate if they received content in each area and how helpful the content had been. Findings include:

- At least 40 percent of staff members indicated they participated in training in all topic areas.
- Areas in which the *most* staff members reported receiving training were: using the ISIP system (68%), integrating technology into the curriculum (64%), kindergarten transition/Road Maps (63%), and *Opening the World of Learning* (62%).
- Areas in which the *least* staff members (less than 50%) reported receiving professional development were: vocabulary and active engagement, Dialogic Reading, family literacy/involvement, Montana Early Learning Guidelines, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary.
- At least 60 percent of staff members found the following professional topics the *most helpful*: *Opening the World of Learning*, using student-level data, MSRP Continuous Improvement Cycle, letter knowledge, print awareness, oral language, vocabulary and active engagement, emergent writing, using teacher-level data, and the Montana Literacy Plan.
- At least 75 percent of staff members found the following professional development topics the *least helpful*: using the ISIP system, PreK Core Sourcebook, Core Big Ideas, phonological awareness, and phonemic awareness.

Family Involvement

Through the work of the Family Literacy and Kindergarten Transition coordinators, MTPEL encourages family involvement in their child's education. Research shows relationships between teachers and parents contribute to positive outcomes for children (Diamond, Justice, Siegler, & Snyder, 2013). This year, as funding allowed, center staff members used strategies they developed over previous years to encourage parents to use literacy resources with their child. These included distributing family literacy kits, either through a library check-out system or individually to families; offering open houses; inviting parents to attend field trips; and hosting family literacy nights aligned to curriculum unit themes. These types of events build relationships between teachers and parents.

Many parents were involved in family literacy activities—events, field trips, and using family literacy kits (Table 3-1). In fact, only 8 percent of respondents indicated they had not participated in any family literacy event. Parents were more likely to attend two or three events rather than just one (34%, 44%, and 16% respectively).

Table 3-1
Family Involvement in Family Literacy Activities, 2012–2013 (N=270)

Activity/Event	Percent Participating
Attend events at your child's preschool where you learned about the MTPEL program, Family Literacy Kits, field trips, and other activities available to you and your child	84%
Use a Family Literacy Kit at home with your child	77%
Attend field trips with your child	50%

Center staff members arranged opportunities for preschool children to visit their elementary school, meet their kindergarten teacher, and/or participate in kindergarten activities. Some preschool and kindergarten teachers shared data and strategies for working with students (including individualized education plans) and, at one site, worked with the general education classroom preschoolers to teach them how to support the special education preschoolers who would be in their kindergarten classroom next fall.

Fewer parents reported participating in kindergarten transition activities than family literacy activities; about 24% of respondents indicated doing so (Table 3-2). Many parents reported plans to attend kindergarten transition activities later (i.e., after the survey was administered) (86%).

Table 3-2
Family Involvement in Kindergarten Transition Activities, 2012–2013 (N=270)

Event	Participated
Kindergarten Transition	
Attend a kindergarten orientation	16%
Meet your child's kindergarten teacher	12%
Plan to attend a kindergarten readiness/orientation event in your community	86%

Summary

MTPEL used a variety of formats including meetings and coaching from ERF Specialists, consultants, and, at some sites, site coaches to provide professional development to MTPEL center staff members. MTPEL provided professional development in a differentiated manner to meet the needs of new and returning staff members at both the leadership and classroom levels. Professional development content included:

- Integrating Tier 1 curriculums (such as *Opening the World of Learning*, *Language for Learning,* and *Creative Curriculum*) and integrating the main components of early literacy (such as alphabet knowledge, oral language/vocabulary, print concepts, and phonemic awareness), the *CORE Sourcebook*, and technology, into classroom planning and instruction
- Reviewing the Montana Literacy Plan and aligning the Montana Early Learning Guidelines to the Common Core to ensure preschool children were prepared for entry into kindergarten
- Collecting and using student-, teacher-, and center-level data to improve and differentiate instruction
- Establishing/refining systems for administering progress monitoring assessments and delivering interventions

Areas in which the most staff members reporting receiving training were using the MSRP student assessment system, integrating technology into the curriculum, kindergarten

transition/Road Maps, and *Opening the World of Learning*. Fewer center staff members reported receiving professional development in vocabulary and active engagement, Dialogic Reading, family literacy/involvement, the Montana Early Learning Guidelines, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary.

Center staff members found professional development in the following content areas most helpful: *Opening the World of Learning*, using student-level data, the MSRP Continuous Improvement Cycle, letter knowledge, print awareness, oral language, vocabulary and active engagement, emergent writing, using teacher-level data, and the Montana Literacy Plan.

Many family members continued to be involved in early literacy activities by receiving family literacy kits, and participating in open houses, field trips; family literacy nights. Parents were far more likely to attend family literacy events than kindergarten transition activities.

Chapter Four: Professional Development Outcomes

The Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL) implemented its professional development program as a means of giving center staff members and parents essential skills. These skills, when practiced in the classroom, home, and community, are intended to increase preschoolers' ability to participate in preschool activities and eventually transition successfully to kindergarten. This chapter uses data from a variety of sources to ascertain the impact that preschool teachers', teacher assistants' (TAs), coaches', center directors', and parents' participation in professional development or educational opportunities had on their knowledge and practice. It uses data from the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*, the Parent Survey, and data from telephone interviews with Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) staff members.

Teacher Knowledge Survey

The *Teacher Knowledge Survey* is comprised of two parts. Part One is a knowledge test containing 50 multiple choice questions and 20 true or false questions about "ways to support language and literacy in the classroom." Part Two contains 20 statements about "personal learning styles and beliefs as a caregiver;" respondents use a 5-point Likert scale that best reflects their disagreement/agreement with the statement.

Part One

Evaluators grouped the 70 items in Part One into 12 categories based on content.[1] Table 4-1 shows these categories, the number of collapsed items, and the average percentages of items answered correctly overall and in each category. Data reflect teachers' knowledge at baseline in winter 2010, spring 2011 and 2012, and fall 2012 and spring 2013.

[1] Four items were not categorized.

[2] A total of 13 surveys were completed in fall; 15 were completed in spring. Ten surveys were matched

Table 4-1
Teacher Scores on Teacher Knowledge Survey, Part One (Winter 2010, Spring 2011 and 2012, Fall 2012, and Spring 2013)[2]

Item Category	Winter 2011	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
Phonological/Phonemic Awareness & Phonics (9 items)	60%	65%	70%	60%	70%
Language and Vocabulary Development (12 items)	56%	56%	55%	64%	64%
Letter Knowledge (3 items)	43%	42%	47%	48%	23%
Print Awareness (8 items)	56%	56%	58%	60%	64%
Emergent Writing (6 items)	62%	84%	73%	77%	78%
Reading (6 items)	86%	93%	86%	87%	85%
Working with ELLs (4 items)	73%	85%	90%	83%	88%
Children's Family and Culture (3 items)	65%	75%	76%	73%	80%
Differentiating Instruction (6 items)	66%	76%	63%	72%	62%
Assessment (8 items)	56%	73%	57%	68%	66%
Math (5 items)	43%	57%	49%	58%	52%
Total Score	61%	69%	66%	69%	69%

Overall in fall 2012 and spring 2013, respondents answered just over two-thirds (69%) of the items correctly on Part One of the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*.

Regardless of time, staff members were most knowledgeable in the areas of reading, working with English language learners (ELLs), emergent writing, and incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms. Staff members were least knowledgeable on the topic of letter knowledge. Teacher's knowledge increased over the year in the areas of phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics, incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms, working with ELLs, and print awareness. Teachers answered considerably fewer items correctly between fall and spring in the areas of letter knowledge, differentiating instruction, and math. In almost all areas, the average answers correct increased from baseline in winter 2011. The most notable changes were in the areas of emergent writing, incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms, working with ELLs, assessment, and phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics.

Part Two

Evaluators grouped the 20 items in Part Two into three content-based categories. Table 4-2 displays these categories, the number of collapsed items in each subscale,[3] and the average score (and standard deviation) on each subscale, overall and in each category. In analyzing these data, evaluators converted the 5-point Likert scale used on the survey into numbers as

[2] A total of 13 surveys were completed in fall; 15 were completed in spring. Ten surveys were matched fall to spring. Six of the matched surveys were from teachers who participated the previous year. Three surveys from fall were missing names.

[3] Two items were not categorized. All four sites were represented in both the fall and spring analyses.

follows: "1"=Strongly Disagree, "2"=Disagree, "3"=Neutral, "4"=Agree, and "5"=Strongly Agree.

Table 4-2
Teacher Scores on Teacher Knowledge Survey, Part Two (Winter 2010, Spring 2011 and 2012, Fall 2012, and Spring 2013

Item Category	Mean Score (SD)				
	Winter 2011	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013
Confidence (8 items)	3.9 (0.4)	4.1 (0.4)	4.0 (0.6)	4.0 (0.5)	4.2 (0.5)
Efficacy[4] (4 items)	3.7 (0.6)	4.0 (0.6)	3.9 (0.6)	3.8 (0.6)	4.2 (0.7)
Attitudes About Learning (6 items)	3.9 (0.3)	3.4 (0.3)	3.5 (0.5)	3.4 (0.5)	3.5 (0.3)
Average Score (18 items)	3.9 (0.3)	3.8 (0.4)	3.8 (0.4)	3.7 (0.4)	3.9 (0.4)

Table 4-2 shows a slight improvement from fall 2012 to spring 2013 in center staff members' opinions about their confidence, efficacy, and attitudes about learning. They continued to be more likely to agree with the confidence and efficacy items than the attitude items. From baseline in winter 2011 to spring 2013, there was no change in the total score on Part Two of the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*. However, scores increased in the confidence and efficacy items and decreased on the attitude items.

Teacher Perceptions of Change in Instruction and the Classroom Environment

Evaluators asked MTPEL teachers to rate their ability to perform certain task in their classroom using a scale of "1" to "5" where 1 was "low ability" and 5 was "high ability." In all cases, teacher's self-reports of change were positive (see Table 4-3). Teachers perceived the most growth in the tasks involving preparing their classroom environment to engage children and language and literacy activities and instructing (average growth of 0.6); they perceived less growth in the area of using data to prepare, differentiate, and modify instruction (0.1). Few, if any, teachers provided examples of the types of changes that occurred in these areas this year.

Table 4-3
Teachers' Self-Report Change in Instruction and Classroom Environment Fall 2012 to Spring 2013

Task	Fall 2012 Mean (SD)	Spring 2013 Mean (SD)
Prepare the classroom environment to engage children in language and literacy activities.	3.8 (1.2)	4.5 (0.6)
Instruct children to best prepare them for kindergarten.	4.0 (0.9)	4.5 (0.6)
Use data to prepare, differentiate, and modify instruction	4.2 (1.0)	4.3 (0.8)

[4] Two items were reverse scored (#8 and #14).

Family Involvement

The MTPEL program encouraged parental participation to increase involvement in their child's education and ultimately help their child be successful in school. The evaluation collected two measures of the impact of parental participation in educational opportunities on their child's preparedness for kindergarten: selected items from the *Parent Reading Belief Inventory* and parental reports.

The evaluator, in collaboration OPI staff members, selected eight items from the *Parent Reading Belief Inventory* that best reflected the goals of parental involvement in MTPEL. These eight items were included in the Parent Survey administered in fall 2012 and again in spring 2013. Table 4-4 summarizes the items and the responses in fall and spring.

Table 4-4
Parent Responses to Parent Reading Belief Inventory Items, Fall 2012 to Spring 2013

Item	Fall 2012			Spring 2013		
	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree & Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
When we read, I try to sound excited so my child stays interested.	6%	28%	66%	5%	33%	63%
Children learn new words, colors, names, etc. from books.	6%	36%	58%	5%	34%	61%
Reading helps children be better talkers and better listeners.	6%	24%	70%	5%	24%	71%
My child knows the names of many things he or she has seen in books.	8%	32%	61%	6%	33%	61%
When we read, I want my child to help me tell the story.	6%	38%	57%	6%	35%	59%
I ask my child a lot of questions when we read.	10%	42%	48%	6%	41%	54%
When we read, I want my child to ask questions about the book.	7%	33%	61%	6%	29%	65%
When we read, we talk about the pictures as much as we read the story.	6%	36%	59%	7%	33%	60%

In both fall and spring, the vast majority of responding parents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the eight statements. There were no statistically significant changes in parent responses between the fall and spring administration of the surveys.

Parent self reports were a second measure of impact. Parents reported the number of days per week they read with and engaged in educational activities with their child. In fall and spring, these averages were similar—parents reported reading with their child 4.5 days a week in the

fall and 4.8 days a week in the spring; they reported engaging in educational activities with their child 4.6 days a week in the fall and 4.7 days a week in the spring.

Parents also reported the extent to which their participation in MTPEL parent activities helped them to get their child ready to go to kindergarten. The majority of those participating found the activities at least "somewhat" helpful in doing so (see Table 4-5).

Table 4-5
Family Perceptions of the Helpfulness of Family Literacy Activities, 2012–2013

Event	Helped Them to Get Their Child Ready to Go To Kindergarten		
	N	Somewhat	A lot
Attend events at your child's preschool where you learned about the MTPEL program, Family Literacy Kits, field trips, and other activities available to you and your child	134	37%	29%
Use a Family Literacy Kit at home with your child	121	40%	35%
Attend field trips with your child	79	33%	33%

Finally, research indicates that an important contributing factor to a successful kindergarten transition is when children have a positive perception about school (Pianta, Rimm-Kauffman, & Cox, 1999). The vast majority of surveyed MTPEL parents (96%) indicated that their child enjoyed going to school.

Summary

While center staff members participated in professional development and parents participated in family literacy activities throughout the 2012–2013 preschool year, there were few notable impacts in terms of measuring changes and practice and attitudes.

In regard to the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*, in fall 2012 and spring 2013, respondents answered just over two-thirds (69%) of the items correctly on Part One. Regardless of time, staff members were most knowledgeable in the areas of reading, working with English language learners (ELLs), emergent writing, and incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms. Staff members were least knowledgeable on the topic of letter knowledge. Teacher's knowledge increased over the year in the areas of phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics, incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms, working with ELLs, and print awareness. In regard to Part Two of the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*, there was a slight improvement in center staff members' opinions about their confidence, efficacy, and attitudes about learning. They continued to be more likely to agree with the confidence and efficacy items than the attitude items.

When asked to rate their ability to perform certain task in their classroom preschool teachers reported perceived growth in preparing their classroom environment to engage children and language and literacy activities and instructing children (average growth of +0.6). However, they reported little perceived growth in the area of using data to prepare, differentiate, and modify instruction (+0.1).

In regard to parents, there were no significant changes in the proportion of parents responding affirmatively to the eight statements on the *Parent Reading Belief Inventory*. Parents continued to report reading and engaging in educational activities with their child between 4 and 5 days a week in the fall and spring. Finally, parents thought their participation in MTPEL parent activities was helpful in preparing their child for kindergarten.

Chapter Five: Child Outcomes

One of the Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL) goals is that "all participating children will graduate with high achievement levels in language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, and classroom skills necessary to participate effectively in elementary school and to become proficient at reading." This chapter looks at changes in children's early literacy skills as measured by three assessments—*the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test 4* (PPVT), the *Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening* (PALS), and the *Test of Preschool Early Literacy* (TOPEL).

The chapter begins with an overall analysis of all MTPEL children's performance on the assessments administered in fall 2012 and spring 2013. Evaluators determined the percentage of children who gained the early literacy skills levels necessary to participate effectively in school and become proficient in reading. Evaluators based proficiency levels on scores established by the test developers and on conversations with MTPEL staff members. Included are additional analyses that summarize changes in the percentages of children "at benchmark" from fall 2010 through spring 2013. The chapter concludes with analyses of preschool teacher-reported data on listening comprehension.

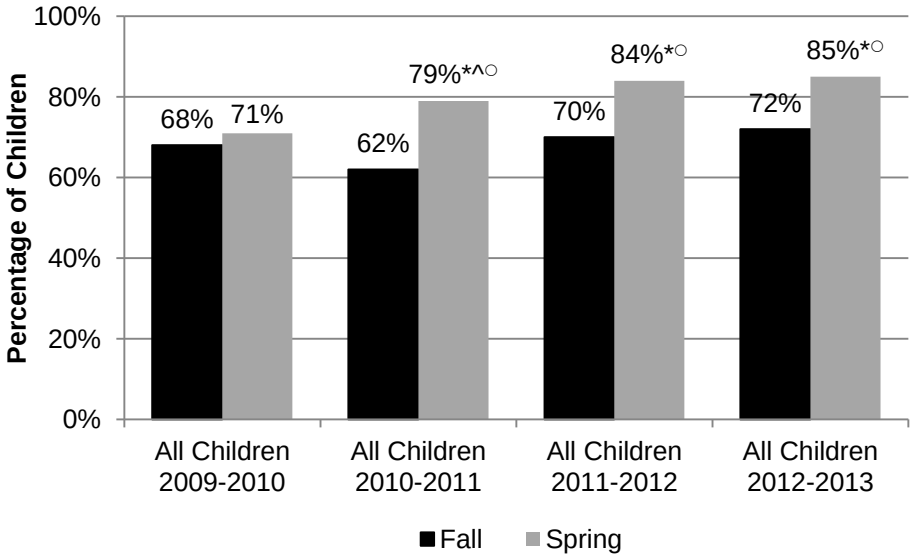
PPVT

The PPVT produces a raw score which is converted into a standard score. An average standard score on the PPVT is 100. Children receiving a score between 85 and 115 are considered "Average," with those scoring between 85 and 99 "Low Average," and those scoring between 101 and 115 "High Average." (See Chapter One for further interpretation of PPVT scores.) In this chapter, evaluators used a standard score of 90 as "benchmark." Children scoring less than 90 did not meet benchmark; those with standard scores of at least 90 met benchmark.

Figure 5-1 shows changes in the percentages of children who met benchmark on the PPVT in winter and spring 2010, fall 2010 and spring 2011, fall 2011 and spring 2012, and fall 2012 and spring 2013. From fall 2012 to spring 2013, there was a statistically significant increase of 13 percentage points in children meeting benchmark (72% to 85%) (McNemar test p=.000).

Every spring a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2011, 2012, and 2013 these increases were statistically significant. Furthermore, each spring a larger proportion of children met benchmark compared to the previous spring. In spring 2011 this increase was statistically significant (p=.038); in spring 2012 and 2013 it was not. Overall from spring 2010 to spring 2013, the increase in the proportion of children at benchmark on the PPVT was statistically significant (p=.001).

Figure 5-1
Percentage of Children Meeting Benchmark on the PPVT, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

PALS

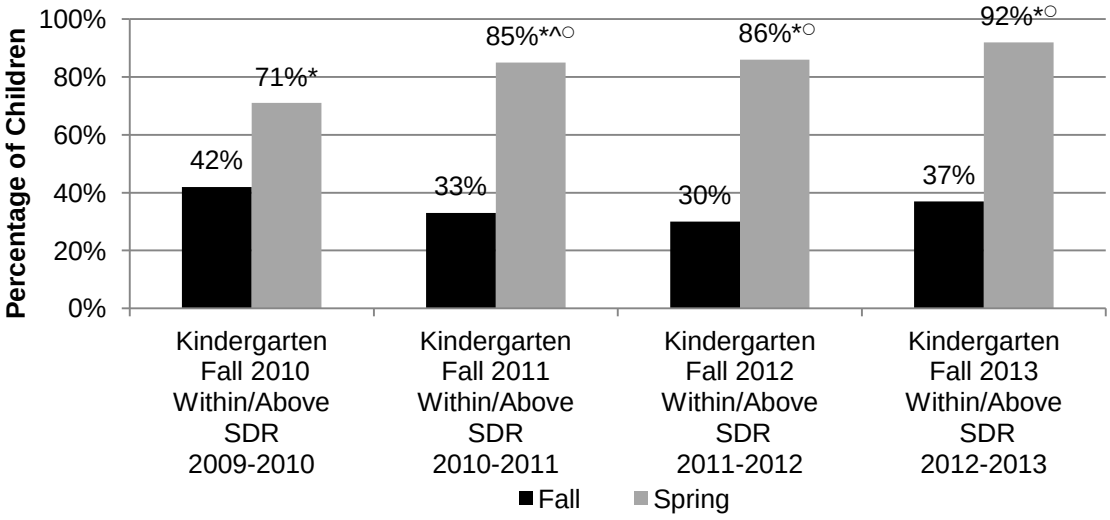
The evaluation analyzed three PALS tasks administered to MTPEL children: Name Writing, Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition, and Letter Sounds. The PALS provides a "Spring Development Range" (SDR) for four-year-old children who are preparing to start kindergarten. Children of this age are expected to score at least a "5" on the name writing rubric, to correctly identify at least 12 upper-case alphabet letters, and to correctly make at least four letter sounds.

Name Writing

Figure 5-2 shows the percentage of children age-eligible to attend kindergarten in the fall, within/above the Spring Developmental Range (SDR) on the PALS Name Writing task in winter and spring 2010, fall 2010 and spring 2011, fall 2011 and spring 2012, and fall 2012 and spring 2013. It shows that slightly more than one-third (37%) of children scored within or above the SDR in fall 2012, while over nine-tenths (92%) did so in spring 2013. This increase was statistically significant (McNemar test p=.000).

Every spring a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 these increases were statistically significant. Furthermore, each spring a larger proportion of children met benchmark compared to the previous spring. In spring 2011 this increase was statistically significant (p=.004); in spring 2012 and 2013 it was not. Overall from spring 2010 to spring 2013, the increase in the proportion of children at benchmark on the PALS Name Writing task was statistically significant (p=.000).

Figure 5-2
Percentage of Children, Age-eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall, with PALS Name Writing Scores Within/Above the Spring Developmental Range, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



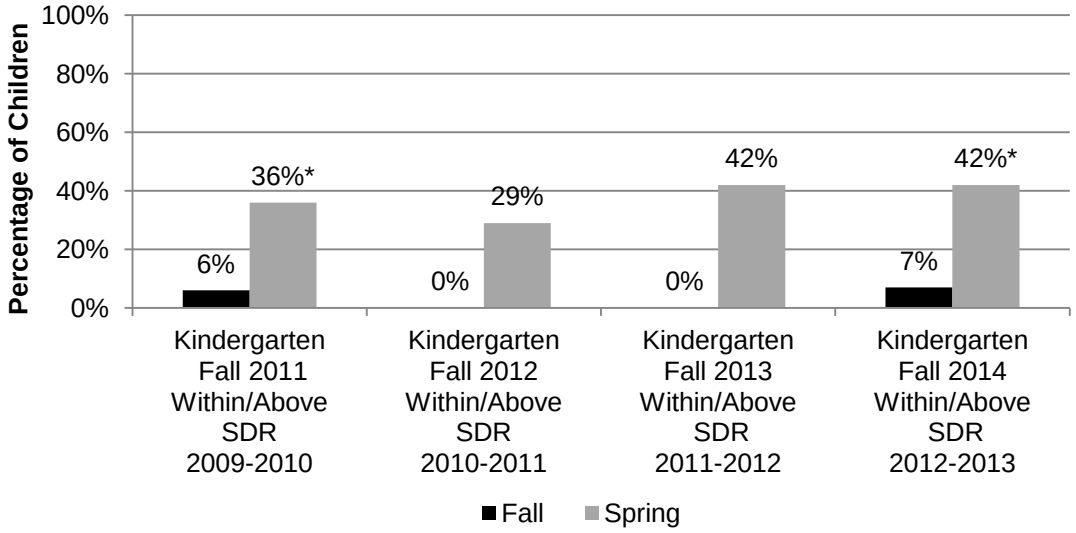
*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Figure 5-3 shows the same information for children eligible to attend a second year of preschool. Seven percent of children scored within or above the SDR in fall 2012; about two-fifths (42%) did so in spring 2013. This increase was statistically significant (McNemar test p=.000).

Every spring a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2010 and 2013, the increase was statistically significant. Evaluators cannot perform tests of significance on proportions that contain 0 percent, as they did in fall 2010 and fall 2011. Figure 5-3 shows increases in the percentages of children within or above the SDR from fall 2010 to spring 2011 and fall 2011 to spring 2012 that were equal to or larger than that experienced between winter and spring 2010 (29 percentage points and 42 percentage points, compared to 30 percentage points). Since the increase from winter to spring 2010 was statistically significant, logically we can infer that the changes from fall 2010 to spring 2011 and fall 2011 to spring 2012 were significant as well.

In spring 2011, the proportion of children scoring within or above the SDR was smaller than the proportion that did so in spring 2010. In spring 2012, the proportion of children scoring within or above the SDR was larger than the proportion that did so in spring 2011. In spring 2013, the proportion of children scoring within or above the SDR was the same as the proportion that did so in spring 2012. In spring 2013, the proportion of children scoring within or above the SDR was larger than the proportion that did so in spring 2010. However, none of these changes were statistically significant (p=.336, p=.106, p=.944, and p=.464, respectively).

Figure 5-3
Percentage of Children, Not Age-eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall, with PALS Name Writing Scores Within/Above the Spring Developmental Range, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



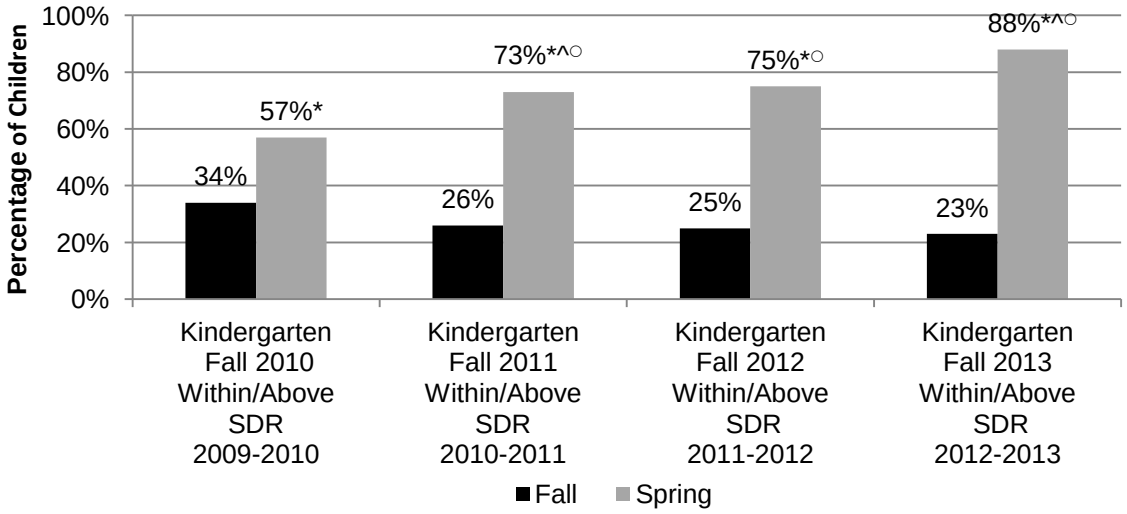
*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition

Figure 5-4 shows the percentage of children age-eligible to attend kindergarten in the fall, within or above the SDR on the PALS Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition task in winter and spring 2010, fall 2010 and spring 2011, fall 2011 and spring 2012, and fall 2012 and spring 2013. About one-quarter of children (23%) scored within or above the SDR in fall 2012, while almost nine-tenths (88%) did so in the spring 2013. This increase was statistically significant (McNemar test p=.000).

Every spring a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 these increases were statistically significant. Furthermore, each spring a larger proportion of children met benchmark compared to the previous spring. In spring 2011 and 2013, this increase was statistically significant (p=.003 and p=.002, respectively); in spring 2012, it was not. Overall from spring 2010 to spring 2013, the increase in the proportion of children at benchmark on the PALS Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition task was statistically significant (p=.000).

Figure 5-4
Percentage of Children, Age-eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall, with PALS Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition Scores Within/Above the Spring Developmental Range, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



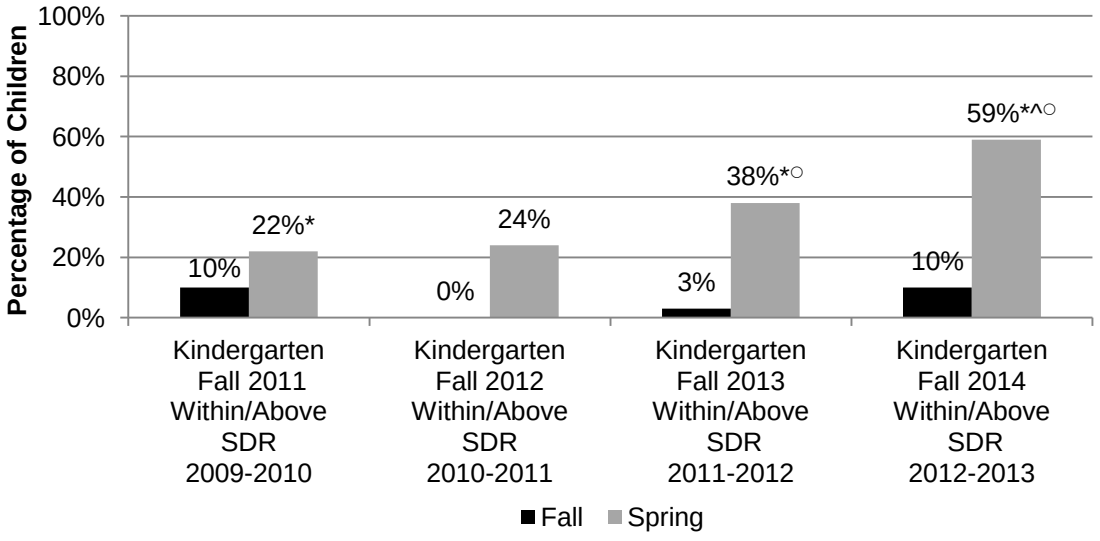
*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Figure 5-5 shows the same information for children eligible to attend a second year of preschool. Ten percent of the children scored within or above the SDR in fall 2012; by spring 2012, almost three-fifths (59%) did so. This increase was statistically significant (McNemar test p=.000).

Every spring a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2010, 2012, and 2013, the increases were statistically significant. Again, evaluators cannot perform tests of significance on proportions that contain 0 percent, as they did in fall 2010. However, Figure 5-5 shows an increase in the percentage of children within or above the SDR from fall 2010 to spring 2011 that was larger than that experienced between winter and spring 2010 (24 percentage points compared to 12 percentage points). Since the increase from winter to spring 2010 was statistically significant, logically we can infer that the change from fall 2010 to spring 2011 was significant as well.

Furthermore, each spring a larger proportion of children met benchmark compared to the previous spring. In spring 2011 and spring 2012 these increases were not statistically significant. However, in spring 2013 they were and, overall, from spring 2010 to spring 2013, the increase in the proportion of children at benchmark on the PALS Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition task was statistically significant (p=.014 and p=.000).

Figure 5-5
Percentage of Children, Not Age-eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall, with PALS Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition Scores Within/Above the Spring Developmental Range, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



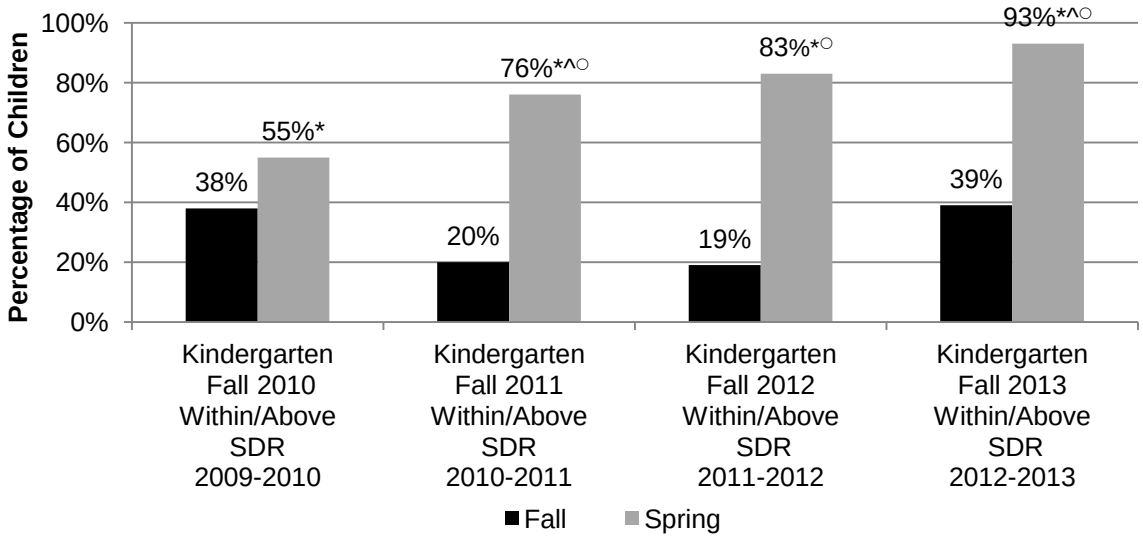
*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Letter Sounds

Figure 5-6 shows the percentage of children eligible to attend kindergarten in the fall, within or above the SDR on the PALS Letter Sounds task in winter and spring 2010, fall 2010 and spring 2011, fall 2011 and spring 2012, and fall 2012 and spring 2013. It shows that two-fifths of children (39%) scored within or above the SDR in fall 2012; over nine-tenths (93%) did so in spring 2013. This increase was statistically significant (McNemar test p=.000).

Every spring a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 these increases were statistically significant. Furthermore, each spring a larger proportion of children met benchmark compared to the previous spring. In spring 2011 and 2013, this increase was statistically significant (p=.000 and p=.004, respectively); in spring 2012 it was not. Overall from spring 2010 to spring 2013, the increase in the proportion of children at benchmark on the PALS Letter Sounds task was statistically significant (p=.000).

Figure 5-6
Percentage of Children, Age-eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall, with PALS Letter Sounds Scores Within/Above the Spring Developmental Range, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013

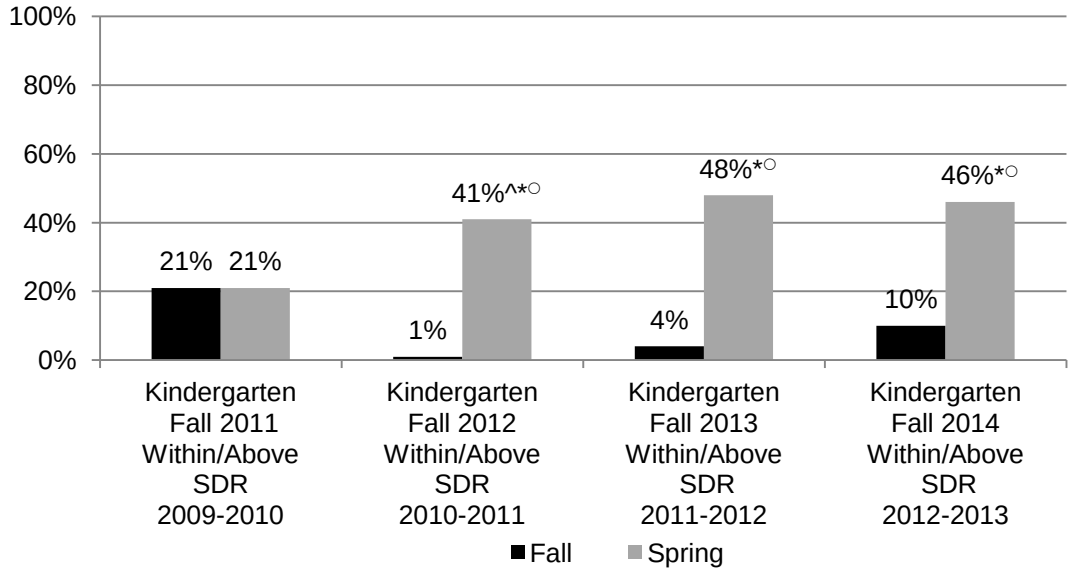


*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Figure 5-7 shows the same information for children eligible to attend a second year of preschool. Ten percent of the children scored within or above the SDR in fall 2012; almost half (46%) did so by spring 2013. This increase was statistically significant (McNemar test p=.000).

In every spring except spring 2010, a larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment. In spring 2011, 2012, and 2013 these increases were statistically significant. Furthermore, each spring, except 2013, a larger proportion of children met benchmark compared to the previous spring. In spring 2011, this change was statistically significant (p=.022); in spring 2012 and 2013 it was not. Overall from spring 2010 to spring 2013, the increase in the proportion of children at benchmark on the PALS Letter Sounds task was statistically significant (p=.006).

Figure 5-7
Percentage of Children, Not Age-eligible to Attend Kindergarten in Fall, with PALS Letter Sounds Scores Within/Above the Spring Developmental Range, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

TOPEL

The TOPEL also produces a raw score which is converted into a standard score. An average standard score on the TOPEL is 100. The TOPEL standard scores place a child in one of three categories; a score above 110 is considered "Above Average," a score from 90 to 110 is considered "Average," and a score less than 90 is considered "Below Average." See Chapter One for further interpretation of TOPEL scores. Again, evaluators used a standard score of 90 as "benchmark."

Evaluators analyzed data from three TOPEL subtests administered to MTPEL children: Print Knowledge, Definitional Vocabulary, and Phonological Awareness. The Early Literacy Index was also calculated.

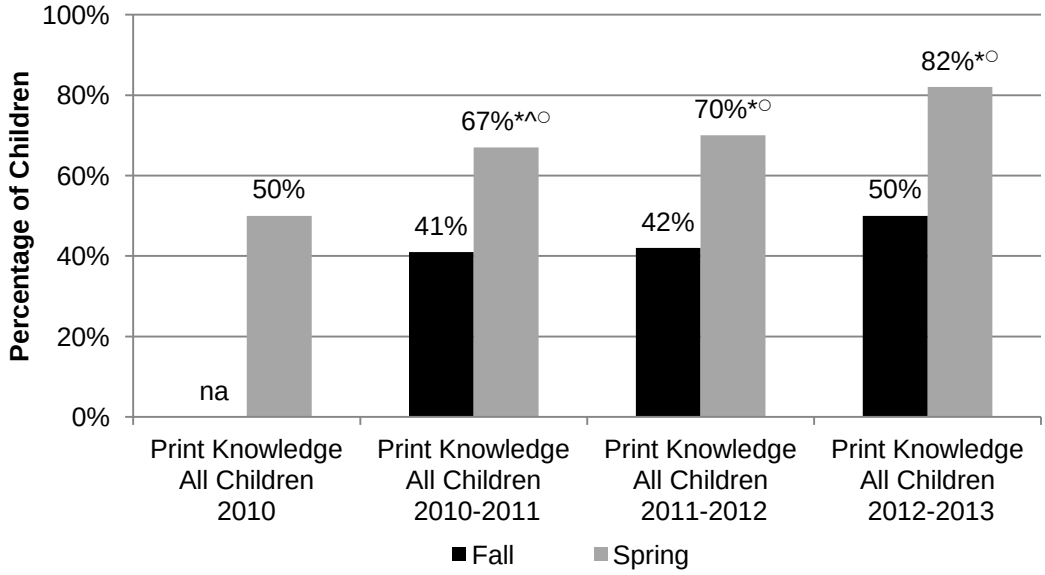
Figure 5-8 to 5-11 show the percentages of children meeting benchmark in spring 2010, fall 2010 and spring 2011, fall 2011 and spring 2012, and fall 2012 and spring 2013 on the three TOPEL subtests and the Early Literacy Index. From fall 2012 to spring 2013 there were statistically significant increases in the percentage of children meeting benchmark in all cases (McNemar test p=.000).

- Print Knowledge subtest—increase of 32 percentage points (50% to 82%)
- Definitional Vocabulary subtest—increase of 15 percentage points (74% to 89%)
- Phonological Awareness subtest—increase of 16 percentage points (63% to 79%)
- Early Literacy Index—increase of 24 percentage points (58% to 82%)

On all measures and in every spring, a statistically significant larger percentage of children met benchmark compared to the previous administration of the assessment.

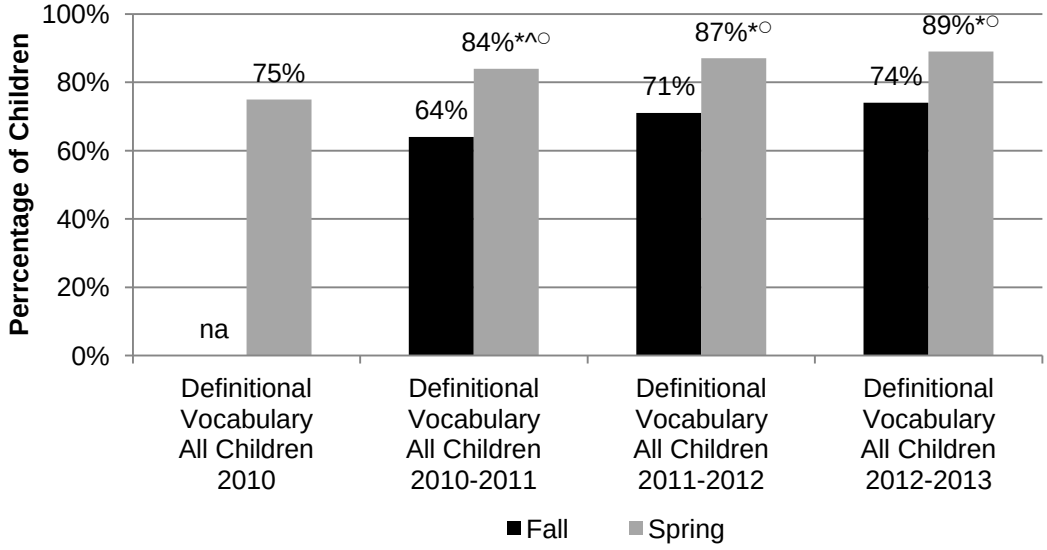
Finally, in all cases, the changes in the proportions of children meeting benchmark from spring 2010 to spring 2011 and spring 2010 to spring 2013 were significant. The changes in the proportions of children meeting benchmark from spring 2011 to spring 2012 were not statistically significant in any case. The changes in the proportions of children meeting benchmark from spring 2012 to spring 2013 were not statistically significant, except in the case of phonological awareness (p=.003).

Figure 5-8
Percentage of Children Meeting Benchmark on the TOPEL Print Knowledge Subtest, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



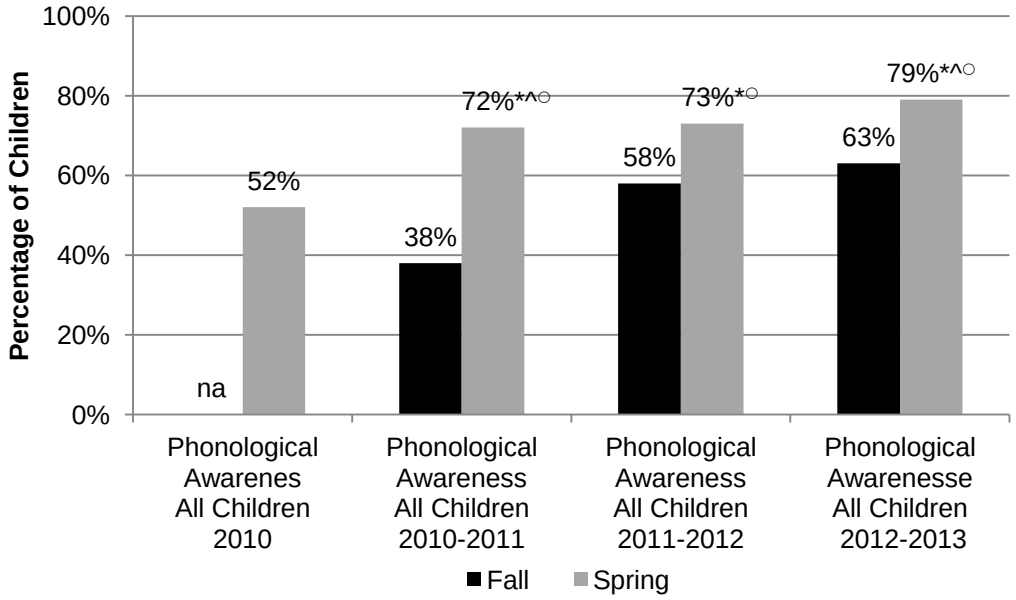
*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Figure 5-9
Percentage of Children Meeting Benchmark on the TOPEL Definitional Vocabulary Subtest, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



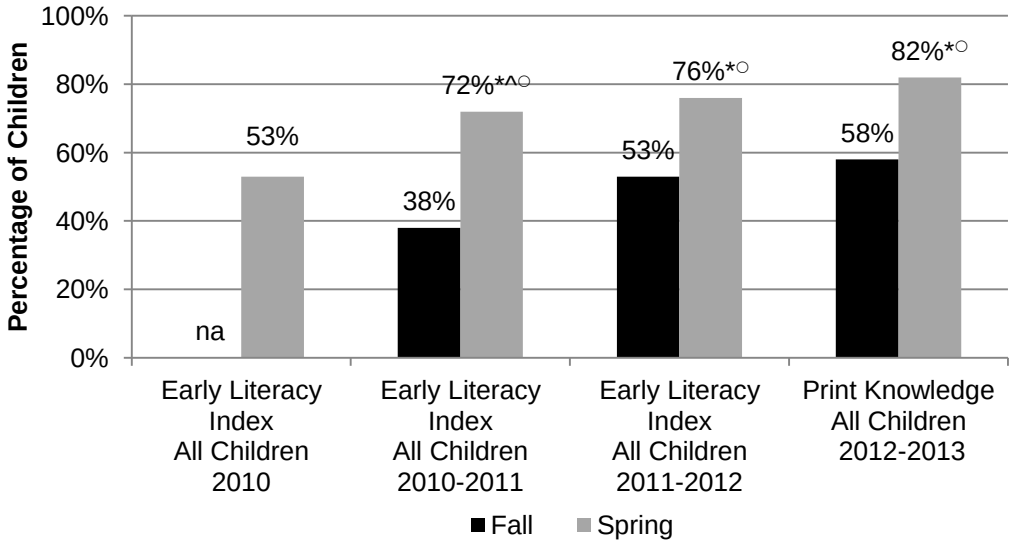
*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Figure 5-10
Percentage of Children Meeting Benchmark on the TOPEL Phonological Awareness Subtest, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Figure 5-11
Percentage of Children Meeting Benchmark on the TOPEL Early Literacy Index, 2009–2010, 2010–2011, 2011–2012, and 2012–2013



*statistically significant increase fall to spring (within year)
^statistically significant increase from previous spring
○statistically significant increase from baseline (spring 2010)

Table 5-1 summarizes this year's results from the above analyses and includes effect sizes. An effect size is an index that measures the magnitude of the relationship between two variables in a standardized manner. Evaluators used Hedges' g to gauge the relative magnitude of the difference between achievement in the fall and spring. A recent meta-analysis of the effects of early education interventions on cognitive development found a mean effect size of .23 in studies with treatment and control groups (Camilli, Vargas, Ryan, & Barnett, 2010).

Table 5-1
Summary of 2012–2013 PPVT, PALS, and TOPEL Data Analyses

Early Reading Skills	Percentage of Children Meeting Benchmark		Effect Size**
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	
Oral Language			
Receptive Vocabulary: PPVT	72%	85%*	.29
Expressive Vocabulary: TOPEL Definitional Vocabulary	74%	89%*	.46
Phonological Awareness			
TOPEL Phonological Awareness	63%	79%*	.66
Print Knowledge			
TOPEL Print Knowledge	50%	82%*	.91
Alphabet Knowledge (PALS)			
Kindergarten in Fall 2013	23%	88%*	1.4
Kindergarten in Fall 2014	10%	59%*	1.9
Letter Sounds (PALS)			
Kindergarten in Fall 2013	39%	93%*	.90
Kindergarten in Fall 2014	10%	46%*	1.4

* Statistically significant change from fall to spring.

** Effect sizes were calculated using pretest/posttest means and standard deviations from PPVT and TOPEL standard scores and PALS raw scores. Cohen's *d* is reported.

On all assessments, more children met benchmark in spring 2013 than in fall 2012. These gains were all statistically significant, except for the receptive language measure. Effect sizes exceeded the mean effect size from the 2010 meta-analysis and all were in the moderate to large range according to Cohen (1988). By spring, the majority of children (79% to 89%) were at benchmark on any given assessment, except for the children age-eligible to attend a second year of preschool (as measured by the PALS).

Movement in Benchmark Categories

Evaluators assessed changes in preschool teachers' instructional skills by looking at teachers' ability to keep the skills of children, who arrive in their classroom in the fall at benchmark, at that same, or better, level over the course of the year, while also moving children not at benchmark to benchmark. Table 5-2 summarizes children's movement in the benchmark categories (below and at/above) from fall 2012 to spring 2013.

Table 5-2
Movement in Benchmark Categories, 2012–2013 PPVT, PALS, and TOPEL

Assessment	n	Below Benchmark Fall 2012 and Spring 2013	Below Benchmark Fall 2012, At Benchmark Spring 2013	n	At Benchmark Fall 2012 and Spring 2013	At Benchmark Fall 2012, Below Benchmark Spring 2013
PPVT	57	44%	56%	137	96%	4%
TOPEL						
Definitional Vocabulary	52	33%	67%	139	96%	4%
Phonological Awareness	74	40%	60%	117	89%	11%
Print Knowledge	95	27%	73%	96	92%	8%
PALS (kindergarten-bound children)						
Upper Case Alphabet Recognition	110	15%	85%	33	100%	0%
Name Writing	90	12%	88%	53	98%	2%
Letter Sounds	87	14%	86%	56	100%	0%
PALS (returning preschool children)						
Upper Case Alphabet Recognition	53	45%	55%	*	*	*
Name Writing	55	56%	44%	*	*	*
Letter Sounds	33	60%	40%	*	*	*

*Number too small to report.

The vast majority of children making satisfactory progress in fall 2012 continued to make satisfactory progress in spring 2013 (89%-100%); a smaller proportion of children age-eligible to attend a second year of preschool were successful in fall and spring in regard to name writing skills. Children not making satisfactory progress in fall 2012 and thus eligible for intervention in a RTI process had more variable progress. Just over one-half of the children eligible for RTI in regard to their receptive vocabulary skills were at benchmark in spring 2013 (56%). Between three-fifths and three-fourths of children eligible for RTI in expressive vocabulary and phonological and print awareness skills were at benchmark in spring 2013 (60%-73%). The vast majority of children age-eligible to attend kindergarten in fall 2013 and eligible for RTI in regard to name writing and letter naming and sound skills were at benchmark in spring 2013 (at least 85%). At least two-fifths of children age-eligible to attend a second year of preschool in fall 2013 and eligible for RTI in regard to name writing and letter naming and sound skills were at benchmark in spring 2013 (44%, 55%, and 40%, respectively).

Evaluators also measured changes in teachers' instructional skills by looking at changes in the proportion of children who met benchmark from spring to spring. Teachers participated in professional development starting in January 2010 and that continued through spring of that year. Professional development addressed numerous content areas, including learning the two new curriculums and collecting and using data from a variety of progress-monitoring and outcome assessments related to children's early literacy skills and the preschool classroom environment. Teachers would have had approximately four months to begin making changes in their practice across all of these areas.

Table 5-3 summarizes the percentage point gains that children who reached benchmark achieved over the duration of the grant on their PPVT, PALS, and TOPEL assessments.

Data in the four columns on the right-hand side of the table uses the previous spring as baseline and shows that after one full year of professional development and coaching, significantly more children had achieved benchmark on assessments by spring 2011 (children age-eligible to return to preschool were less likely to make significant gains). An additional year of professional development and coaching, from summer 2011 to spring 2012, contributed to these previous gains. Using the same spring 2010 baseline, by spring 2013, significantly larger proportions of children were attaining benchmark on all assessments (except for returning preschoolers' in their name writing skills).

The four columns of data on the left-hand side of Table 5-3 show that, in an overwhelmingly vast majority of cases, teachers were instrumental in their children making statistically significant gains, over time, in their early literacy skills. Within-year gains were positive and significant in most cases.

Table 5-3
*Summary of 2010–2013 PPVT, PALS, and TOPEL Percentage Point Gains**

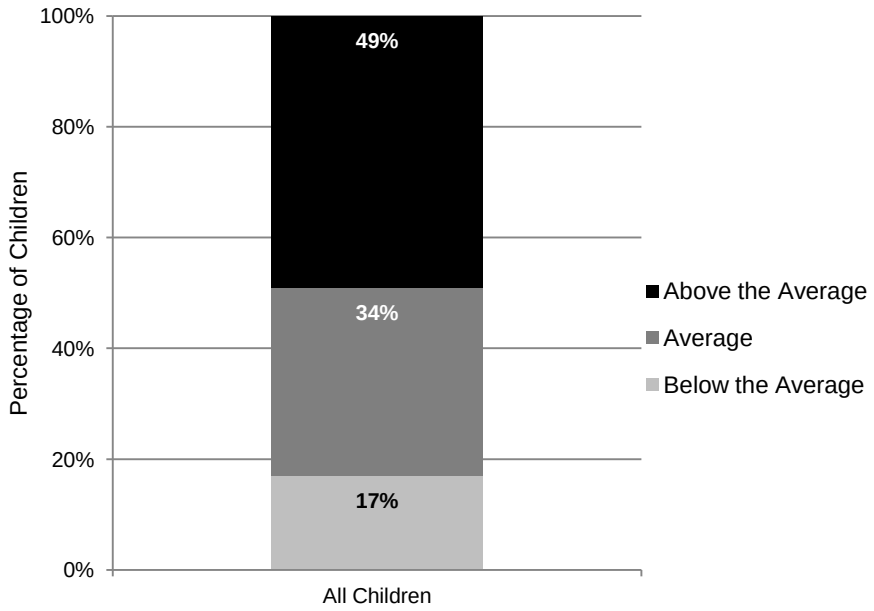
	Gains Achieved Within Each Preschool Year, Winter/Fall to Spring				**Gains Achieved Across Preschool Years and Baseline**			
	Winter 2010–Spring 2010	**Fall 2010–Spring 2011**	**Fall 2011–Spring 2012**	**Fall 2012–Spring 2013**	**Spring 2010–Spring 2011**	**Spring 2011–Spring 2012**	**Spring 2012–Spring 2013**	**Spring 2010–Spring 2013**
PPVT	+3	**+17**	**+14**	**+13**	**+8**	+5	+1	**+14**
PALS Name Writing								
Kindergarten	**+29**	**+52**	**+56**	**+55**	**+14**	+1	+6	**+21**
Preschool	**+30**	*+29*	*+42*	**+35**	-6	+13	+0	+6
PALS Upper-Case Alphabet Recognition								
Kindergarten	**+23**	**+47**	**+50**	**+65**	**+16**	+2	**+13**	**+31**
Preschool	**+12**	*+24*	*+35*	**+49**	+2	+14	**+21**	**+37**
PALS Letter Sounds								
Kindergarten	**+17**	**+56**	**+64**	**+54**	**+21**	+7	**+10**	**+38**
Preschool	0	**+40**	**+44**	**+36**	**+20**	+7	-2	**+25**
TOPEL Print Knowledge	na	**+26**	**+28**	**+32**	**+17**	+3	+12	**+32**
TOPEL Definitional Vocabulary	na	**+20**	**+16**	**+15**	**+9**	+3	+2	**+14**
TOPEL Phonological Awareness	na	**+34**	**+15**	**+16**	**+20**	+1	**+6**	**+27**
TOPEL Early Learning Index	na	**+34**	**+23**	**+24**	**+19**	+4	**+6**	**+29**

* Bold numbers indicate statistically significant changes.

Listening Comprehension

Evaluators measured children's achievement in listening comprehension skills through teachers' reports of what they observed from their children at the end of the year. The Staff Satisfaction Survey asked teachers to indicate the number of children in their classroom who were performing "below," "at," or "above" where the average child performs in this area. According to teacher reports, over three-quarters (83%) of the children were performing at or above where the average child performs (Figure 5-12).

Figure 5-12
Percentage of Children, Performing Below, At, or Above Where the Average Child Performs in Listening Comprehension Skills, Spring 2013



Summary

MTPEL preschool children continued to make gains in all areas of early literacy. As measured by the PPVT, TOPEL, and PALS, their receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, and name writing skills and their knowledge of letters, letter sounds, and concepts of print improved significantly from fall 2012 to spring 2013. According to teacher reports, over three-quarters (83%) of the children were performing at or above where the average child performs in listening comprehension. On all but one assessment, a significantly larger proportion of children were at benchmark in spring 2013 than were in spring 2010. Findings also indicate that teachers' instructional skills in these areas improved over time; almost every spring, a higher proportion of children attained benchmark than in the previous spring, on every assessment.

Chapter Six: Conclusions

The Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL) was largely successful in attaining its goals.

1. **All participating children will graduate with high achievement levels in language, phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, and classroom skills necessary to participate effectively in elementary school and to become proficient at reading.**

   While all participating children did not graduate with high achievement levels n important early reading skills, by spring 2013, almost four-fifths of MTPEL students did. The majority of children were at benchmark in the areas of knowledge of letter sounds (93%), name-writing ability (92%), expressive language (89%), upper-case letter recognition (88%), receptive language (85%), print knowledge (82%), and phonological awareness (79%).

2. **All classrooms will contain the materials (instructional, play) and spatial arrangements (e.g., centers) that will support the development of children's language and early literacy skills and all teachers will achieve high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices.**

   The evaluation measured classroom implementation and teacher proficiency in several ways, and the different measures produced different findings. According to teacher self-reports and child assessment data, teachers achieved high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices to create and maintain an environment conducive to children acquiring early literacy skills. Although classroom materials and arrangements were not formally evaluated in Year 4, teachers were asked to rate their ability to prepare their classroom environment to engage children and language and literacy activities. Teachers self-reported growth in this area—using a five-point scale of "1" meaning low ability to "5" meaning high ability—of 0.7 (from 3.8 to 4.5). Similarly they self-reported growth, using the same scale, of 0.5 (from 4.0 to 4.5) in their ability to instruct children to best prepare them for kindergarten. Finally, teachers were asked to rate their ability to use data to prepare, differentiate, and modify instruction; teachers self-reported growth of 0.1 (from 4.2 to 4.3) on the same 5-point scale. In all cases, teachers self-reported their ability in spring 2013 in the high range.

   According to child assessment scores, teachers also achieved high levels of instructional proficiency with research-based practices. Children's receptive and expressive vocabulary, phonological awareness, and name writing skills and their knowledge of letters, letter sounds, and concepts of print improved significantly from fall 2012 to spring 2013. In addition, according to teacher reports, over three-quarters (83%) of the children were performing at or above where the average child performs in listening comprehension.

Furthermore, on all but one assessment, a significantly larger proportion of children was at benchmark in spring 2013 than was in spring 2010. Finally, findings also indicate that teachers' instructional skills in these areas improved over time; almost every spring, a higher proportion of children attained benchmark than had done so the previous spring, on every assessment.

However, evaluators found no growth on Part One of the *Teacher Knowledge Survey*. In fall 2012 and spring 2013, teachers answered just over two-thirds (69%) of the items correctly. While teachers' knowledge increased over the year in the areas of phonological/phonemic awareness and phonics, incorporating their children's family and culture in their classrooms, working with ELLs, and print awareness, it decreased in the areas of letter knowledge, differentiating instruction, and math.

3. Teachers' instructional proficiencies are applied both to (1) children making satisfactory progress, and (2) children for whom progress monitoring identifies the need for intervention in a Response to Intervention (RTI) process.

The vast majority of children making satisfactory progress in fall 2012 continued to make satisfactory progress in spring 2013 (89%-100% at benchmark). Children not making satisfactory progress in fall 2012, and thus eligible for intervention in a RTI process, had more variable progress by spring (56%-88% at benchmark).

Table 6-1
Percentage of Children at Benchmark in Spring 2013, by Assessment

	Percentage	
Assessment	Children Making Satisfactory Progress (Fall 2012)	Children Eligible for RTI (Fall 2012)
PPVT	96% (131)	56% (32)
TOPEL Definitional Vocabulary	96% (133)	67% (35)
TOPEL Phonological Awareness	89% (104)	60% (44)
TOPEL Print Knowledge	92% (88)	73% (69)
PALS Upper Case Alphabet Recognition	100% (33)	85% (93)
PALS Name Writing	98% (52)	88% (79)
PALS Letter Sounds	100% (56)	86% (77)

Just over one-half of the children eligible for RTI for their receptive vocabulary skills were at benchmark in spring 2013 (56%). Between three-fifths and three-fourths of children eligible for RTI in expressive vocabulary, and phonological and print awareness skills, were at benchmark in spring 2013 (60%-73%). The vast majority of children age-eligible to attend kindergarten in fall 2013 and eligible for RTI for name writing, and letter naming and sound skills, were at benchmark in spring 2013 (at least 85%).

4. **All children and families will transition successfully into K-3 programs aligned with scientifically based reading research (SBRR).**

MTPEL implemented family literacy and kindergarten transition programs that would help children and families transition successfully into K-3 programs. Research shows successful transitions occur under several conditions, which MTPEL demonstrated (Pianta, Rimm-Kauffman, & Cox, 1999):

- The vast majority of parents indicated that their child enjoyed school (96%).
- Assessment results indicate that most children showed steady growth in academic skills.
- The majority of parents participated in classroom activities, field trips and family literacy events and parents of kindergarten-bound children took advantage, or were planning to take advantage, of kindergarten transition activities.
- Some preschoolers, parents and kindergarten teachers had the opportunity to develop relationships prior to the start of school.
- "Road Maps" and other kindergarten transitions activities established collaborative efforts between schools, parents, community groups, and social service organizations.

Finally, kindergarten teachers of a cohort of spring 2011 MTPEL graduates reported that they use a variety of SBRR curriculums and assessments to assess and monitor early literacy skills. MTPEL graduates from spring 2013 will be attending the same schools.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Staff Satisfaction Survey

Montana Partnership for Early Literacy
Center Staff Member Survey, Spring 2013

This survey is an important part of the evaluation of the Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL). Your opinion is an important aspect in helping to determine what parts of the project are working well and what areas might need to change. Your responses help program planners identify areas where support can be phased out or added in. Please know that your responses are confidential. They are only seen by staff members at Education Northwest who are working on the evaluation. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Angela Roccograndi at Angela.Roccograndi@educationnorthwest.org or 800-547-6339, extension 632.

When completing the survey, think only about your experiences with MTPEL during **the 2012–2013 preschool year.**

Please return your completed survey to your center coach in the enclosed envelope by **Friday, May 3, 2013.**

BACKGROUND

1. I am a (mark all that apply):
   - ❑ Teacher — **Complete pages 1-7**
   - ❑ Teacher Assistant — **Complete pages 1-5 and page 7, question #60.**
   - ❑ Center Coach — **Complete pages 1-5 and page 7, question #60.**
   - ❑ Center Director — **Complete pages 1-5 and page 7, question #60.**
   - ❑ Member of the MSRP Leadership Team

2. I work at (mark one): ❑ Evergreen ❑ Great Falls Head Start ❑ Great Falls Public ❑ Hardin Special Ed

3. I began participating in MTPEL (mark one)…
   - ❑ 2009-2010 preschool year
   - ❑ 2010–2011 preschool year
   - ❑ 2011–2012 preschool year
   - ❑ 2012–2013 preschool year

(OVER)

COMMUNICATIONS

Rate the quantity and quality of communications (face-to-face and indirect) with the following MTPEL staff members.

A. Place an "X" in the "NA" column if you have little or no reason to have communication with the MTPEL staff member.
   - If you answered "NA," do not complete Sections B or C.

   Otherwise place an "X" in the "Too Little," "Just Right," or "Too Much" column.

B. Circle the number which best describes the tone of communications with the individual. A "1" indicates the most negative tone and a "5" indicates the most positive tone.

C. Place an "X" in the column which describes the extent to which you found communications with the individual helpful.

	A Quantity				B Tone					C Helpfulness of Communications				
					Negative to Positive									
Role and Name	**NA**	**Too Little**	**Just Right**	**Too Much**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**Not at All**	**A Little**	**Average**	**Very**	**Extremely**
4. Project Director (Debbie)					1	2	3	4	5					
5. State ERF Specialist (Rhonda)					1	2	3	4	5					
6. State ERF Specialist (Tara)					1	2	3	4	5					
7. Assessment/Kindergarten Transition (Terri)					1	2	3	4	5					
8. Center Director					1	2	3	4	5					
9. Center Coach					1	2	3	4	5					
10. Consultant (Barb, Marci, or Dian)					1	2	3	4	5					

11. If you have any comments related to communications with MTPEL staff members, please write them here.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FORMATS

Please complete the chart below about your participation in, and feedback on, MTPEL professional development **formats** (setting, structure, NOT content) this year.

A. Place an "X" in the "Yes" column if you participated in the listed MTPEL professional development format.
   Place an "X" in the "No" column if you did not participate.
   Place an "X" in the "NA" column if the format was not offered to you.
   - If you answered "No" or "NA" to a format, do not complete Section B.

B. Place an "X" in the column which describes the extent to which you found the MTPEL professional development format helpful.

	A Participated in Format			B Helpfulness of Professional Development Format				
Professional Development Format	**NA**	**Yes**	**No**	**Not at All**	**A Little**	**Average**	**Very**	**Extremely**
12. Meeting October 10-11, 2012								
13. Meeting December 11-12, 2012								
14. Meeting February 27-28, 2013								
15. Feedback from center director (following a walk-through)								
16. In classroom coaching with site coach								
17. Pre-/post-conference coaching with site coach								
18. On-site support with Rhonda or Tara								
19. On-site support with Barb, Marci, or Dian								
20. Video reflection/portfolio development								

(OVER)

21. If you have any comments related to MTPEL professional development formats, please write them here.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTENT

Please complete the chart below about your participation in, and feedback on, MTPEL professional development **content** this year.

A. Place an "X" in the "Did Not Receive" column if you did not receive professional development in the content area. Leave Section B blank.

B. Place an "X" in the column which describes the extent to which you found the MTPEL professional development content helpful.

Professional Development Content	A Did Not Receive	B Helpfulness of Professional Development				
		Not at All	A Little	Average	Very	Extremely
22. PreK Core Sourcebook						
23. Core Big Ideas						
24. Opening the World of Learning						
25. Language for Learning						
26. Emergent Writing						
27. Print Awareness						
28. Letter Knowledge						
29. Phonological Awareness						
30. Phonemic Awareness						
31. Oral Language						
32. Vocabulary						
33. Vocabulary and Active Engagement						

Professional Development Content	A Did Not Receive	B Helpfulness of Professional Development				
		Not at All	A Little	Average	Very	Extremely
34. Dialogic Reading						
35. Integrating Technology into the Curriculum						
36. Using the ISIP system						
37. Working in teams (collaborative teaming, data teams)						
38. Using student-level data (data notebooks; ISIP, PALS, IGDI)						
39. Using teacher-level data analysis (data notebooks; iWalkthrough, ELLCO/CLASS, teacher reflections, etc.)						
40. Kindergarten Transition/Road Maps						
41. Family Literacy/Family Involvement						
42. Community Involvement						
43. Montana Literacy Plan						
44. Continuous Improvement Cycle						
45. Montana Early Learning Guidelines						
46. Montana Common Core Standards						
Center Directors and/or Coaches Only: 47. iWalkthrough and instructional rounds						
48. Instructional Coaching						

49. If you have any comments related to MTPEL professional development content, please write them here.

(OVER)

Teachers Only

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Think about all the children in your classroom. In comparison to the "average" child, how do the children in your classroom perform in regard to **listening comprehension**?

Age of Children	Total Number of Children in Your Classroom	Number of Children Performing…		
		Below Where the Average Child Performs	Where the Average Child Performs	**Above** Where the Average Child Performs
50. Returning Students (3/4 year olds)				
51. Kindergarten-bound Students				
Total	A	B		
52. Are the numbers in cell A and B the same? ❑ Yes (If not, please correct)				

53. Think about the children in your classroom who have an IEP *and* have shown little or no progress in their MTPEL child-assessment scores. What progress have they made on their IEP? Please provide a description for each child in your classroom separately (you do not have to provide the name of the child). Attach an additional page if necessary.

Using a scale of 1-5, with "1" being low ability and "5" being high ability, rate your ability to engage in the three areas below in fall 2012 and spring 2013. Use the area below each question to provide examples of what has changed the most this year. If you don't think there have been any changes, explain why not.

My ability to…	Fall 2012 (circle one)					Spring 2013 (circle one)				
54. Prepare the <u>classroom environment</u> to engage children in language and literacy activities…	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
55. What has changed the most in regard to preparation of your *classroom environment*?										
56. <u>Instruct</u> children to best prepare them for kindergarten…	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
57. What has changed the most in regard to your *instruction*?										
58. <u>Use data</u> to prepare, differentiate, and modify instruction…	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
59. What has changed the most in regard to your *use of data*?										

60. If you have any additional comments or suggestions about your participation in MTPEL, please provide them here.

THANK YOU! ENJOY YOUR SUMMER BREAK.

Appendix B: Teacher Knowledge Survey

MONTANA PARTNERSHIP FOR EARLY LITERACY
TEACHER KNOWLEDGE SURVEY

Thank you for participating in the Montana Partnership for Early Literacy. Your responses on the enclosed questionnaire will help us understand what caregivers know about language and literacy development, and what you do to support learning for the children in your care setting.

This questionnaire consists of three parts. **Part I** is a series of multiple choice and true/false questions about ways to support language and literacy in the classroom. Please select the best answers from the available options.

Part II asks about your personal learning styles and your beliefs as a caregiver. In this section, we are only interested in your personal beliefs and preferences; there are no right or wrong answers.

Part III asks some questions about your personal characteristics and experiences.

- **Please complete all three sections**
- **Please do not skip any items.**

Your responses to this questionnaire will be kept completely confidential. We request your name and contact information solely to keep track of which questionnaires have been returned to us. Your name will never be used in reporting results from our project.

When your questionnaire is completed, please return it to your center's coach, sealed, in the envelope provided. Please return your questionnaire no later than Friday, May 3, 2013.

Thank you for your participation in this project!

Part I: Language and Literacy Knowledge

Directions: Carefully read each of the following multiple choice questions. Circle only one answer from the choices provided to you for each question. If you are unsure of the right answer, please make your best guess.

1. The ability to point to the print as what carries the message instead of the picture on a page indicates a child's understanding:

   a. That the words are made up of sounds which can be blended together.
   b. That the print is what is read.
   c. That words in sentences relate to each other.
   d. That words can regularly occur in the same contexts.

2. During group time, Ms. Betty is about to read a book to her 5-year olds. As she reads, she runs her finger along underneath the text. Why does she do this?

   a. To help children connect sounds and letters.
   b To keep children's attention.
   c. To help children understand how print works.
   d. To improve children's letter knowledge.

3. Which of the following practices might **best** help children learn how letters are related to their letter names?

   a. Matching pictures and beginning sounds.
   b. Singing the alphabet song slowly and pointing to each letter.
   c. Asking children to spell the letters of their name.
   d. Saying the letters of the alphabet out of order.

4. All of the following instructional activities improve children's understanding of how we use print in daily activity **EXCEPT**:

   a. Creating a print-rich environment.
   b. Copying simple words.
   c. Writing a menu.
   d. Reading a recipe.

5. Which of the following is an appropriate method for assessment and evaluation of children in early childhood education settings?

   a. Observation.
   b. Documentation.
   c. Interviews.
   d. All of the above.

6. Which of the following statements best describes how print works in storybooks?

   a. Print is just like oral language.
   b. Print is written by people.
   c. Print is read from left to right and top to bottom.
   d. All of the above.

7. Assessment of preschool children generally should be:

   a. Linked to the home background of each child.
   b. Primarily norm-referenced.
   c. Untimed but similar for all children.
   d. Ongoing and informal.

8. Each of the following is an informal assessment technique appropriate for preschoolers **EXCEPT**:

   a. Anecdotal records.
   b. Portfolios.
   c. Running records.
   d. Emergent storybook readings.

9. Which of the following statements describes authentic assessment?

   a. Children's learning is compared to others using norm-referenced assessment.
   b. Children's learning is examined in the context of meaningful activity.
   c. Children's learning is assessed using authentic children's literature.
   d. Children's learning is assessed for understanding of real versus fantasy.

10. What are appropriate ways for early childhood educators to use observation as a method of assessing children?

    a. To make conclusions about a child's development.
    b. To provide information to parents.
    c. To plan new activities.
    d. b and c only.

11. One way to informally assess a child's phonological awareness might be to ask the child:

    a. To retell a favorite story.
    b. To identify nursery rhymes.
    c. To identify the letters of the alphabet.
    d. To sound out the letters in his or her name.

12. Which of the following is typical of the language development of 3-year-olds?

a. Begins to use simple sentences of at least three to four words.
b. Begins to retell their favorite stories with a beginning, middle, and end.
c. Begins to carry on a conversation involving three or more turns.
d. Begins to use declarative statements, like "Mommy get me."

13. Each of the following is an effective way to foster language development **EXCEPT:**

a. Asking children to plan, do, and review their free-choice activities.
b. Expanding children's responses, such as "You'd like to play in the kitchen and make pizza? And what kind of pizza would you like to make today?"
c. Re-reading a favorite book.
d. Encouraging children to respond to questions in complete sentences.

14. Which of the following statements <u>best</u> describes how Vygotsky viewed language development?

a. Language development is innate and every child is born with all the tools needed to acquire language.
b. Language development is a social and cultural phenomenon.
c. Language development occurs the same way for all children.
d. Language development is a result of environmental conditioning.

15. Someone who engages children every day in play, discussions, conversations, and singing songs is likely to be providing which of the following:

a. Opportunities for recognizing the relationship between sounds and letters.
b. Experiences for children to learn and use new language rules.
c. Opportunities for oral language development.
d. Kinesthetic tactile experiences.

16. Each of the following activities is helpful for promoting oral language development **EXCEPT:**

a. Naming letters.
b. Outdoor play.
c. Singing.
d. Free-choice time.

17. Which of the following activities <u>best</u> promotes vocabulary development?

a. Reading a story.
b. Writing.
c. Talking.
d. Watching television.

18. Which of the following best explains why developing phonemic awareness in English may be especially challenging for a child for whom English is a second language?

a. The sound system of the child's first language may not use an alphabet.
b. Some languages may require attention only to whole words, not sounds in words.
c. Sometimes teachers may not articulate sounds clearly.
d. The sound structure of the child's first language may be different from English.

19. Which of the following statements best defines phonemic awareness?

a. Matching letters and sounds.
b. Hearing and manipulating individual sounds in spoken words.
c. Recognizing and spelling the letters in syllables.
d. Identifying words in context.

20. The alphabetic principal is best described as the understanding that:

a. Sounds in words can be represented by letters.
b. Letters are formed from curved and straight lines.
c. There are many different alphabets in the world.
d. The sounds we speak are different from the letters we write.

21. Phonological awareness is best described as the ability to:

a. Hear the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning.
b. Match sounds to letters.
c. Recognize different animal sounds like "oink" and "meow."
d. Identify upper and lower-case letters.

22. Which of the following practices best help preschoolers blend sounds in words?

a. Identifying words that begin with the same sound.
b. Distinguishing sounds in words.
c. Stretching the sounds out in a word and putting them together.
d. Hearing different sounds, and identifying the letters that correspond to those sounds.

23. Encouraging children's early writing attempts is important because:

a. It improves children's spelling skills.
b. It helps children understand how sounds relate to letters.
c. It improves children's thinking skills.
d. It helps them develop good handwriting skills.

24. Children who are emergent writers benefit most from opportunities to:

a. Explore the uses of writing for communicating with others.
b. Learn how to form upper and lower-case letters.
c. Copy the texts of favorite story books.
d. Write letters on lined paper.

25. Between the ages of 1 and 5, children learn to use symbols like marks on paper and pictures in their play to:

a. Manipulate objects and understand them.
b. Create and communicate meaning.
c. Learn to differentiate media.
d. Describe the roles of a writer and reader.

26. Four-year-old Sarah has drawn a picture. As Sarah tells her about the picture, the teacher writes down her words, and then reads it back to her. This activity promotes literacy development by:

a. Helping the child learn more about narratives and their structure.
b. Reinforcing the child's understanding of the parts of a story.
c. Increasing the child's awareness of the relationship between written and oral language.
d. Expanding the child's understanding that there are many ways to write letters.

27. The following activities are appropriate for promoting letter knowledge **EXCEPT**:

a. Singing the alphabet song.
b. Playing with alphabet puzzles.
c. Comparing letter shapes.
d. Handwriting.

28. Encouraging children to spell "their way" is helpful because they may learn to:

a. Write correctly.
b. Differentiate print from pictures.
c. Think actively about letter-sound relationships.
d. Figure out the differences between vowels and consonants.

29. All of the following are important ways to encourage preschooler's early writing **EXCEPT**:

a. Encouraging correct spelling.
b. Taking dictation for children unwilling to write.
c. Displaying children's writing around the room.
d. Having a designated writing area equipped with crayons, pencils, stencils, and several types of paper.

30. The most age-appropriate strategy for assessing whether 4-year-olds are ready to learn mathematical symbols for the numbers one through nine is to see if they can:

a. Count from one to nine.
b. Classify nine objects that are similar in shape.
c. Group nine objects into sets of twos and threes.
d. Demonstrate one-to-one correspondence using objects.

31. Mrs. Smith wants to teach the concepts of first, middle, and last to a group of four-year-old children. She might best do this by:

a. Drawing three familiar characters in a row and indicating which character is in which place.
b. Lining up stuffed animals and indicating which animal is in which place.
c. Having children take turns standing in line and asking them to identify who is in which place.
d. Showing the children picture cards of sets of three objects and asking them to tell which objects are in which place.

32. Which of the following activities best reinforces children's understanding of the relationship between the letter "d" and the sound that it makes?

a. Saying words that begin with "d" and pointing to the beginning letter.
b. Spelling words that have the letter "d" in it.
c. Rhyming aloud words that end with the letter "d."
d. Asking children to identify things around the room that begin with the letter "d."

33. Of the following groups of materials, which would be the best selection to aid 4-year-olds in developing initial concepts about the physical characteristics of different objects?

a. Paper, stationery, envelopes, storybooks, and a telephone book.
b. A toy train, pictures of trains, stories about trains, and sound records of trains.
c. Apples, oranges, onions, and peaches.
d. Sandpaper, rough wood, silk cloth, and wet soap.

34. Each of the following is an appropriate activity for helping children understand one-to-one correspondence **EXCEPT**:

a. Counting from 1 to 10.
b. Setting out napkins on the table to match the number of chairs.
c. Counting blocks by pointing to each block.
d. Modeling counting as you point to three objects.

35. If a teacher is trying to promote concepts of print, and a child asks, “Can I paint now?” the teacher might respond:

a. “Let’s see if your name is on the waiting list.”
b. “You should put a paint apron on first, Aki.”
c. “Didn’t I see that you were painting a few minutes ago?”
d. “Looks like the paint easels are in use right now.”

36. One way to encourage reading in the home is to:

a. Go to the library.
b. Plan to read before bedtime.
c. Read often.
d. All of the above.

37. Which of the following is the <u>most</u> effective way to encourage young children to go to a cozy corner book area more often during free-choice time?

a. Reward children who choose to go to the area during free-choice time.
b. Structure 20 minutes of independent reading time each morning.
c. Create an attractive area with open faced bookshelves.
d. Provide at least 50-100 books in the area.

38. Placing menus with pictures and print in the dramatic play center may support young children’s:

a. Understanding of left to right progression.
b. Awareness of the functions of print.
c. Spelling development.
d. All of the above.

39. Ms. Jones places a variety of books in all centers throughout her child care setting. For example, in the kitchen play area she has a selection of simple cookbooks. In the art center, she has several art books. She has some newspapers and magazines in the dramatic play center, and brings a basket of nature and insect books with her when she takes the children outdoors. In what way does this support early reading development for young children?

a. It helps children learn to think about reading as an important part of their daily activities.
b. It ensures that children will spend at least an hour each day reading.
c. It gives children more situations in which they must read to do certain activities.
d. It prevents children from becoming too dependent on Ms. Jones for information and guidance.

40. Interactive storybook reading means that:

a. Children are encouraged to read along with their peers.
b. Children are encouraged to predict what comes next in a story.
c. Children have opportunities to read aloud.
d. Children get to act out the story.

41. Kyesha is a 4-year-old preschooler with reading skills at the kindergarten level. What is the best approach to take with Kyesha to create a supportive learning environment for her?

a. Keep her involved in all group activities so her peers do not notice the difference in her ability.
b. Encourage her parents to enroll her in kindergarten immediately.
c. Make sure she has plenty of opportunities to interact with books on her own.
d. Have her act as a tutor to other children who may show little interest in reading.

42. Which of the following statements best describes why integrating curriculum is important in preschool settings?

a. Children cannot really distinguish between science, reading, and math, and so it makes sense to place all subject matter together.
b. Children are exposed to in-depth study of important information topics.
c. Children need to begin to learn about many different things they will be assessed on in first grade.
d. Children do not seem to enjoy curriculum that is not integrated.

43. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development emphasizes:

a. The difference between a child's level of independent functioning and his or her performance when aided by an adult.
b. The difference between practical, creative, and academic learning.
c. Factors that lead to changes in cognitive tasks.
d. The importance of motivation and the expectation of success.

44. Early childhood educators support English language learning for second language learners by each of the following activities **EXCEPT**:

a. Modeling appropriate use of English.
b. Creating environmental print in children's first and second language.
c. Correcting children's grammar and mispronunciations.
d. Reading storybooks in English.

45. A developmentally-appropriate curriculum is one that:

a. An early childhood educator always plans in cooperation with parents.
b. Builds upon the interests of children.
c. Places a greater emphasis on play than on cognitive skill development.
d. Is established in advance.

46. The pre-operational stage is the second stage of Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Which of the following accurately describes characteristics of children in the stage of cognitive development?

a. Accelerated language development.
b. Less dependence on sensorimotor action.
c. Dependence on concrete representations.
d. All of the above.

47. An early childhood educator who visits with parents at the beginning of each new year and discusses their child's interests is most likely attempting to do which of the following?

a. Gain information that can be used to make engaging assessments.
B. Gain information that can be used to plan holiday activities.
c. Integrate children's home background in planned activities.
d. Help families best utilize community resources.

48. Which of the following models of early childhood education uses developmentally appropriate practice methods?

a. Montessori.
b. Head Start.
d. Reggio Emilia
d. All of the above.

49. Each of the following helps involve parents and families in their children's early education program, EXCEPT:

a. Making home visits to get to know parents and families better.
b. Asking parents what goals they have for their children, and plan activities to try to help children meet these goals.
c. Communicating regularly with parents about their children's progress.
d. Calling parents when a child misbehaves.

50. Ms. Ruppert wants to foster multicultural awareness and appreciation among the diverse children in her child care setting. Which of the following is the best way to go about doing this?

a. Emphasize the similarities between children of different racial and ethnic groups.
b. Help children develop a better understanding of themselves, their culture, and the culture of others.
c. Invite parents to visit the classroom to share stories about their family traditions.
d. Designate a particular day of the week to highlight different cultures not represented by children in the setting.

Directions: Carefully read each of the following statements. At the end of each statement, please indicate whether you think the statement is TRUE or FALSE by circling the best choice. If you are unsure of the correct answer, please make your best guess.

1. It is common for children to have letter name knowledge by age 4.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
2. Children who are non-English language speakers benefit most when they are required to speak in English in formal settings.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
3. Children typically have an intuitive understanding of numbers by the age of 4.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
4. Children's vocabulary in the early years is a strong predictor of their later reading achievement.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
5. It is more important to have small teacher-child ratios in the toddler years when children are beginning to talk, than in early infancy when children spend most of their time napping.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
6. 6. Children always advance from one identifiable stage to another.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
7. Reading instruction should begin about when children are 6½ years old.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
8. Children can generally understand more language than they can produce.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
9. It is common for children to have some number name knowledge by age 2½.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**

10. Children's beginning writing attempts often look like block letters.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
11. Second language learners should be exposed on a regular basis to storybooks in English.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
12. Standardized tests with validity and reliability are the best way to determine if a child is ready for kindergarten.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
13. Children learn to sort and identify letters by their sound features.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
14. Children's knowledge of nursery rhymes is related to their letter knowledge.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
15. Infants learn about their world through sensing and acting.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
16. Correcting a child when he makes a statement like "I runned" by saying, "No, you mean you ran?" helps him learn syntax.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
17. Encouraging parents of second language learners to use the English language exclusively in the home enhances children's English acquisition.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
18. Fathers can affect their children's attitudes and engagement with books.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
19 Parents should point to each word in picture books as they read to their child.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**
20. Block areas generate large amounts of child communication.	**TRUE**	**FALSE**

Part II: Teaching Beliefs & Learning Styles

In this section, we are interested in your personal opinions and beliefs. There are no right or wrong answers—only what you feel is right for you. Please think about each statement carefully, and choose the response that best describes how you feel.

Please rate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
①	②	③	④	⑤

1. I am confident in my ability to support the early reading and writing skills of all of the children in my care.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. I am confident that I can help all of the children in my care develop early writing skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. I enjoy learning about new ways to teach early reading and writing skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. Changing my practice to better support early language development would take a lot of time and energy.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. I am confident that I can help children whose first language is not English make significant progress in their language skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. I am confident that I can teach all of the children in my care to recognize rhymes.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. I am interested in learning more about how to support children's language development.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. I am not very effective in keeping track of children's early reading and writing skill development.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. Being able to support children's language development is more important to me than other teaching skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. I have the knowledge and skills to work effectively with a child who has language difficulties.	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. I am confident that I can motivate all of the children in my care to read or look at books regularly.	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Being a caregiver who can foster children's early reading and writing skills is important to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
①	②	③	④	⑤

13. Learning new ways to support children's early reading and writing skills would be useful to me.	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. I don't teach early reading and writing skills as well as I teach other skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. I understand language concepts well enough to be effective in supporting children's development of early reading and writing skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. I am confident that I can teach all of the children in my care to recognize letter sounds.	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. I would value having a better understanding of children's early language development	①	②	③	④	⑤
18. I would have to give up things I enjoy doing in order to invest time in learning about children's development of early reading and writing skills.	①	②	③	④	⑤
19. I am confident that I can teach all of the children in my care all their alphabet letters.	①	②	③	④	⑤
20. I am confident that I can help all of the children in my care make significant progress in their language skills this year.	①	②	③	④	⑤

Part III: Personal Information

Your name: _____

At what center do you work?

- ○ Evergreen
- ○ Fort Belknap Agency
- ○ Fort Belknap Ramona King
- ○ Fort Belknap Three Strikes
- ○ Hardin
- ○ Great Falls: Annex
- ○ Great Falls: Longfellow
- ○ Great Falls: Skyline

What is your role?

- ○ Lead teacher
- ○ Assistant teacher
- ○ Coach
- ○ Director

What is your highest education level?

- ○ Some high school
- ○ High School Diploma/GED
- ○ Some college
- ○ Associate Degree
- ○ Bachelor's Degree
- ○ Master's Degree
- ○ Other

Which best describes your race or ethnicity?

- ○ American Indian
- ○ Asian or Pacific Islander
- ○ Hispanic Latino
- ○ Black
- ○ White
- ○ Multiracial:
- ○ Other:

About how many years have you worked in child care?

- ○ This is my first year.
- ○ 2-4 years.
- ○ 5-9 years.
- ○ 10-14 years.
- ○ 15-19 years.
- ○ 20 or more years.

Do you have a CDA credential? ○ Yes ○ No

Thank you for completing this questionnaire!

Please place the survey in the envelope provided, seal it, and return it to your coach by May 3, 2013.

Appendix C: Parent Reading Belief Inventory

Parent Reading Belief Inventory—Fall 2012

Your preschool child is participating in a special project in their preschool classroom. This project, The Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL), is funded by a grant from the United States Department of Education. Education Northwest is working with the Montana Office of Public Instruction to find out how well the project is working. This survey is a part of that effort. There are no right or wrong answers and your answers are anonymous. Completing or not completing the survey will not change your child's preschool experience in any way. Please complete the survey and return it in the envelope provided to your son/daughter's preschool teacher by **Friday, October 12, 2012**.

Directions: Listed below are several statements about parent's attitudes and beliefs. Place an X in the box with the answer that is closest to your feelings. Please answer each question in response to your preschool child.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When we read, I try to sound excited so my child stays interested.				
2. Children learn new words, colors, names, etc. from books.				
3. Reading helps children be better talkers and better listeners.				
4. My child knows the names of many things he or she has seen in books.				
5. When we read, I want my child to help me tell the story.				
6. I ask my child a lot of questions when we read.				
7. When we read, I want my child to ask questions about the book.				
8. When we read, we talk about the pictures as much as we read the story.				

In an average week, how many days do you…	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days
9. Read with your child?							
10. Do educational activities with your child?							

11. **What preschool center does your child attend?**

❑ Evergreen ❑ Great Falls Head Start ❑ Great Falls Public ❑ Hardin

12. **Did your child attend this preschool center last year?** ❑ Yes ❑ No

13. **Will your child attend kindergarten in fall 2013 (age 5 before September 11, 2013)?** ❑ Yes ❑ No

Thank you.

Appendix D: Parent Survey

Preschool Parent Survey—Spring 2013

This survey asks about your experiences with the Montana Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL), the program in your child's preschool classroom. Your answers will help program administrators make sure the program is helping you and your child. Please answer each question in response to your preschool child.

Your responses are completely confidential. No one will see them except staff members at Education Northwest who are collecting this information for an evaluation of the program. There are no right or wrong answers. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Angela Roccograndi at 1-800-547-6339, extension 632.

Please return your completed survey to your child's teacher by **Friday, May 3, 2013**.

Listed below are several statements about parents' attitudes and beliefs. Select the answer that is closest to your feelings.

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When we read, I try to sound excited so my child stays interested.	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. Children learn new words, colors, names, etc. from books.	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. Reading helps children be better talkers and better listeners.	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. My child knows the names of many things he or she has seen in books.	❑	❑	❑	❑
5. When we read, I want my child to help me tell the story.	❑	❑	❑	❑
6. I ask my child a lot of questions when we read.	❑	❑	❑	❑
7. When we read, I want my child to ask questions about the book.	❑	❑	❑	❑
8. When we read, we talk about the pictures as much as we read the story.	❑	❑	❑	❑

In an average week, how many <u>days</u> do you…	1 day	2 days	3 days	4 days	5 days	6 days	7 days
9. Read with your child?							
10. Do educational activities with your child?							

-OVER-

This year (September 2012-May 2013) did you….	No, I did not	Yes, *and* it helped me get my child ready to go to kindergarten… A Little	Somewhat	A Lot
1. Regularly talk with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up	❑	❑	❑	❑
2. Attend events at your child's preschool where you learned about the MTPEL program, Family Literacy Kits, field trips, and other activities available to you and your child	❑	❑	❑	❑
3. Use a Family Literacy Kit at home with your child	❑	❑	❑	❑
4. Attend field trips with your child	❑	❑	❑	❑

Please answer the following questions with a "Yes" or a "No."

5. Does your child enjoy going to school? ❑ Yes ❑ No

6. Will your child attend kindergarten in fall 2013 (will she/he be age 5 before September 11, 2013)? ❑ Yes ❑ No (skip to #17)
   a. Did you attend a kindergarten orientation? ❑ Yes ❑ No
   b. Are you planning to attend a kindergarten orientation later this month or next? ❑ Yes ❑ No
   c. Did you meet your child's kindergarten teacher? ❑ Yes ❑ No
   d. Do you think your child is ready to be successful in kindergarten? ❑ Yes ❑ No

7. If you have any comments about your child's attendance in preschool or about your participation in preschool events this year, please write them here.

8. What center does your child attend? ❑ Evergreen ❑ Great Falls Head Start ❑ Great Falls Public ❑ Hardin

9. What is the name of your child's teacher?_____

Appendix E: Montana Office of Pubic Instruction Interview Protocol

Montana (MT) Office of Public Instruction (OPI)
MT Partnership for Early Literacy (MTPEL) Staff Member
Interview Protocol
Spring 2013

1. What was your role in MTPEL this year?

2. Think about the off-site professional development delivered to MTPEL center staff this year.
   a. Describe the off-site professional development for coaches/center directors.
      i. What success did OPI have in offering off-site professional development to coaches/center directors this year?
      ii. What challenges did OPI have in offering off-site professional development to coaches/center directors this year?
   b. Describe the off-site professional development for teachers/teacher assistants.
      i. What success did OPI have in offering off-site professional development to teachers/teacher assistants this year?
      ii. What challenges did OPI have in offering off-site professional development to teachers/teacher assistants this year?

3. Think about the on-site technical assistance and professional development delivered to MTPEL center staff this year.
   a. Describe the work of the OPI team working on-site with coaches/center directors.
      i. What success did OPI have in offering on-site technical assistance and professional development to coaches/center directors?
      ii. What challenges did OPI have in offering on-site technical assistance and professional development to coaches/center directors?
   b. Describe the work of the OPI team working on-site with teachers/teacher assistants.
      i. What success did OPI have in offering on-site professional development to teachers/teacher assistants?
      ii. What challenges did OPI have in offering on-site professional development to teachers/teacher assistants?
   c. Describe the work of the consultants working on-site with coaches/center directors.
      i. What success did consultants have in offering on-site technical assistance and professional development to coaches/center directors this year?
      ii. What challenges did consultants have in offering on-site technical assistance and professional development to coaches/center directors this year?
   d. Describe the work of the consultants working on-site with teachers/teacher assistants.

i. What success did consultants have in offering on-site professional development to teachers/teacher assistants this year?
ii. What challenges did consultants have in offering on-site professional development to teachers/teacher assistants this year?

4. Think about the MTPEL assessments this year.
   a. What summative assessments were administered onsite?
   b. What progress-monitoring assessments were administered onsite?
   c. What success occurred in regard to administering assessments?
   d. What challenges were encountered in regard to administering assessments?
   e. What success did center staff have using data in a response to intervention model and in differentiating instruction?
   f. What challenges did center staff encounter using data in a response to intervention model and in differentiating instruction?

5. Think about the MTPEL classroom observations tools (ELLCO and CLASS).
   a. How did the project collect and use classroom observation data (ELLCO and CLASS) this year?
   b. What successes were encountered in regard to collecting and using classroom observation data?
   c. What challenges were encountered in regard to collecting and using classroom observation data?

6. Think about MTPEL instruction and interventions this year (OWL and LfL).
   a. What successes were encountered in regard to implementing the instruction and intervention materials?
   b. What challenges were encountered in regard to implementing the instruction and intervention materials?

7. Think about MTPEL family literacy activities this year.
   a. What successes did MTPEL have?
   b. What challenges were encountered?

8. Think about MTPEL kindergarten transitions activities this year.
   a. What successes did MTPEL have?
   b. What challenges were encountered?

9. Is there anything else about implementation of MTPEL this year that we have not discussed, but that you think is important to share?